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# A STUDY IN THE THEORY OF VALUE

A THESIS ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL SATISFACTION OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

BY

DAVID WIGHT PRALL

1918



# A STUDY IN THE THEORY OF VALUE

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DAVID WIGHT PRALL

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN PHILOSOPHY

Vol 3, No. 2

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS  
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

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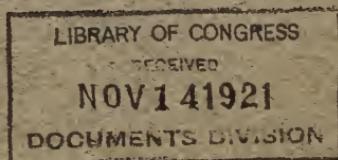
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Vol. 3. No. 2, pp. 179-290

Issued September 3, 1921

## ANALYTICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION .....	179
STATEMENT OF THESIS AND OUTLINE OF CONTENTS .....	179
The acknowledgment of interest in living amounts to the imputing of value to life—Thus valuing is the basis of all value—This affirms not that every value is universally valid, but that any value can be dealt with on the same sort of ground as any other value—The thesis is thus formulated against a compartmental attitude towards human activities—The contention is that recognition in judgment of “lower” values implies the reality of “higher” values; that values as such have a clearly definable status in reality; and that criticism of values always consists in an identical process, whether applied to one sort of value or to another—The chapters of the essay outlined.	
CHAPTER I .....	182
THE QUESTION AS RAISED IN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE .....	182
The difficulty of finding standards for judging literature—Antecedents bear on the question but fail to solve the problem—It is the old question of mechanical explanation of qualities—Illustrations of valuing in ethics on the basis of uncritically assumed authority and of the inadequacy of “antecedents” to explain such valuings—The questions of value-theory raised by such valuings—Formulation once more of the situation illustrated and of the questions involved.	
CHAPTER II .....	196
PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF THE EXPERIENCE OF VALUING AND THE LOGIC OF VALUE JUDGMENTS .....	196
Necessity for a clear view of the empirical experience under discussion—This is to be sought in the first person as its only possible locus—The two tasks of the present chapter are: (1) to describe consciousness of value, ethical and esthetic; (2) to give an account of the logic of this situation—Value-judgment not merely instrumental—The valuing experience and its implication of the good life illustrated in the case of a useful article—An example of ethical value, illustrating the sense in which ethical values are not means but ends—An example of esthetic value, illustrating the sense in which it is true that all values as ends are esthetic—This merely another aspect of the traditional description of the esthetic experience as “intrinsic”—The generalizing of these individual experiences, while it does rest on the assumption that other minds resemble one’s own, is thus assuming only what is necessary to rational discourse—So far the experience of valuing has been described psychologically—For the logical form of the value-judgment we may use Kant’s phrasing in the <i>Critique of Judgment</i> —The difficulty for our investigation is not the form but the import of judgments such as <i>This is right</i> , <i>This is beautiful</i> —This logical difficulty is that of all judgments, however—But to assert it as invalidating all judgments is meaningless—Our real difficulty is not so much logical in any technical sense as it is empirical; we are to seek a fuller account of the meaning of <i>right</i> and <i>beautiful</i> in such situations as were described in the earlier part of the chapter.	

	PAGE
CHAPTER III .....	206
AN ACCOUNT OF VALUE AS INTEREST IN TERMS OF PSYCHOLOGY .....	206
<p>The question at this point seems to be: What is value?—          Psychologists answer that it is based on interest: I value what suits me—That this is merely a psychological result is not significant criticism—According to Shand and Stout valuing anything = having an interest or sentiment directed towards that thing—This is an intelligible account of the valuing experience—In spite of some difficulties and confusions Ribot substantiates this view—The psychological school of value-theorists, Ehrenfels, Meinong, and others, seems more interested in the denotation than in the connotation of value—Since we are looking for the distinguishing characteristics of the experience rather than the variety of instances in which it occurs, or the laws of its occurrence, we get little aid from this school—We have so far merely taken up the psychological result suggested: that value is interest—This, however, suggests a hedonistic doctrine, and it is a question whether such a defense even as Professor Perry's is adequate support for the position—Our interest at least demands a different sort of development of the subject, for we are asking the meaning of the value-judgment.</p>	
CHAPTER IV .....	215
THE PRAGMATIC THEORY OF VALUATION AS EXPOUNDED BY DEWEY ....	215
<p>The definition of value in terms of interest suggests a question as to the function of judgment in determining value—An illustration to show that according to our proposed definition judgment merely records value—Dewey's recognition of the distinction between motor-affective attitude and cognitive judgment—Interdependence of judgments and attitudes does not identify them with each other—While Dewey does admit value in the sense defined in this essay, the statement of his investigation indicates that for him this sense of the word is unimportant and that the significant object of study is a process which he calls valuation—But Dewey admits two senses of the word: to value is to esteem or to estimate, to prize or to appraise—Value in the first sense is a <i>datum</i>, in the second the result of a logical process—Dewey thus regards our definition, which considers value in the first sense, as irrelevant—Dewey's judgment of practice defined and illustrated—Value thus “something to be given by future action”—An illustration of this process of valuation—The judgment here fills out the process itself—Truth of the judgment and validity of the value thus dependent upon outcome in later action—This account seems to contain confusions of thought—It fails to distinguish between a logical process and a succeeding set of motor activities—It makes present truth depend upon a future outcome—It appears that value is not constituted by judgment, but is present before the judgment is made—Summary of the view presented and of the criticism offered.</p>	
CHAPTER V .....	227
THE IDEALISTIC CRITICISM .....	227

So far it has been maintained that having value is based upon being in relation to a motor-affective attitude—The idealistic criticism of such a thesis (1) is in error in its definition

of value, but (2) points to an important phase of value theory not so far treated in this essay—The difficulty in refuting any idealistic theory lies in the idealist's insistence on his own epistemology as the prior question—But this prior question really involves the assumptions to which he objects—The present chapter will attempt the analysis of one example of the idealistic criticism—Bosanquet chosen as representative—One characteristic of idealistic theories seems to be the insistence on the logical nature of value—A second characteristic is that value is in a special sense held to be objective—Idealism appears to make value non-subjective, but somehow of the nature of thought; and it does so on the basis of what is apparently a failure to distinguish motor-affective attitude from cognitive judgment—Our criticism would be that idealism is thus wrong on two points, viz., (1) the objectivity of value and (2) the logical nature of value; but idealism points also to a lack in our theory which a later chapter is to supply—To use Bosanquet as illustrating these errors and this suggestion we must note his general position—Summary of his conception of mind in nature—Quotations to show Bosanquet's essentially idealistic position—This position defines value much as it does reality, and thus neglects the real issue as to what sort of reality value has or is—Bosanquet's argument to be taken up in detail—The sort of experimental *data* he employs—His treatment of the question seems not to distinguish value from the rest of real experience—He meets the issue by attempting to substitute a more adequate concept for that of satiety or end as applied to a finite conscious process—His actual formulation of the problem in a question, *Can values be argued on?*—Difficulty in his use of the word *ultimate*—We can agree with his first assertion, viz., that values can be argued on, but we disagree that this admits their logical nature—We can also agree with his refutation of one interpretation of the negative answer to his question—His second interpretation of the negative answer, however, is our own contention, and we can not agree with his refutation of this answer—This refutation makes two points: (1) that the distinction between motor-affective attitude and cognitive judgment is negligible and (2) that value depends upon the inherence in the object of the character of "logical stability of the whole"—The first point has already been met; the second we must now meet—Summary of the argument up to this point—In admitting that the experience of caring for something is necessary to arguing upon the question of the nature of value Bosanquet appears to admit that interest or motor-affective attitude is closely related to value itself and not at the opposite pole as he has affirmed—Furthermore it can be shown that the "logical character of the whole" merely names a relation which is constituted by a motor-affective attitude—This shown by his phrasing—Furthermore, analysis of Bosanquet's statements in detail indicate either that the experience of the logical character of the whole inherent in the object is another name for motor-affective attitude or else that experiencing the logical character of the whole is not a humanly possible experience—Since valuing is a human experience, the second alternative appears impossible—Bosanquet's conclusion quoted—Summary of the position we have taken in opposition—Our position clearer and more consistent—The next chapter to sketch a theory of value based on this position as to the nature of value.

CHAPTER VI .....	248
THE STATUS AND THE KINDS OF VALUE AS IMPLIED IN JUDGMENTS OF VALUE .....	248

The present chapter to show how all judgments of value imply the reality of esthetic and ethical value and to exhibit the status of value—Value as defined in this essay implies relation to a subject—Some further questions that have not so far been considered—A concrete case of value in the light of our definition—Meanings of the objection that value is objective—These objections answered—Judgments of value, however, are not motor-affective but logical and have logical implications—On the basis of our definition two points to be made—The first of these is the identical nature of value, as illustrated in examples of various sorts of value—To admit this does not blur useful distinctions; it simply makes the concept available to describe any value situation—The second point is to show that judgments of value in any field imply the reality of "higher" values—The identical nature of value tacitly admitted in many of our conventional arrangements—To see that our definition always applies, it is important to notice that while the sort of reality of the object valued may vary the value itself always consists in the same sort of relation to a subject—Thus the intangibility of the object does not affect the nature of its value—The importance of this conception to be illustrated in the next chapter—Some misconceptions stated and the objections thus arising answered—To assert that valuing is not a logical activity does not deny the validity of logical thinking, nor the stability of the universe—To say that judgments of value merely record valuations does not deny that future valuations depend upon previous judgments—Value judgments themselves vary in value as well as in validity—We have thus considered the meaning of *real* value—Meaning of the term *absolute* as applied to value—A suggestion that with proper arrangements money might be a satisfactory criterion of value—The second point in the chapter is to show the implication of the reality of "higher" values in all value-judgments—An example of a value-judgment and its implications of further values: the judgment that *this pencil is valuable* implies the intrinsic value of truth—Sense in which truth is intrinsically valuable—Sense in which the judgment that *truth is valuable* may imply the reality of the value of right action—Sense in which the right is intrinsically valuable—Sense in which the judgment that *this is right* implies the reality of esthetic value—Justification of use of terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* as applied to value—Objection to the term *absolute* as applied to value—None of these considerations denies our purely relational definition of value—This fact shown by illustrative analysis of a particular motor-affective attitude: the valuing may be explained in terms of its component parts or in terms of its end—In either case the value is created by valuing—Religious values are created by the valuing of the valuing activity itself—*Social* is a confusing term as applied to value—Summary of the results of the thesis: it has defended a relational theory of value, but it has not denied the reality of truth or right or beauty.

	PAGE
CHAPTER VII .....	270
AN APPLICATION TO THE THEORY OF LITERARY CRITICISM .....	270

A theory of value should throw some light on the theory of literary criticism—Criticism is a valuing activity and thus adds value to the world—How our theory would apply to the judicial-impressionistic controversy—The present chapter to treat a few arbitrarily chosen points—The reality of literary value—Esthetic values are not always indicated by price, but criticism is nevertheless an attempt to *measure* esthetic value—Value of a poem an example of intrinsic value as defined above—All intrinsic value really esthetic—The value of literature is thus esthetic value, and literary criticism is necessarily esthetic criticism—The abuse of the term *pure literature*: value lying in the relation to a subject which is a complex person, not a special faculty, it follows that *purely literary value* is commonly a false abstraction, involving a form of the substance fallacy—The impressionist-judicial controversy—Criticism must consist of judgments; but judgments of literature are records of impressions—Judicial criticism depends for content on impressions; on the other hand logical inconsistency in judgment is self-destructive—The question of standards and the answer suggested by our theory of value—The lack of formulated standards in the work of judicial critics what we should expect—Logical principles not peculiar to literature, and names for qualities too many to be called standards—Examples: the unities, probability, high seriousness—The first a logical requirement, the last neither peculiar to literature nor universally applicable, the second either a logical requirement or the name of a quality, or both, usually a suggestive descriptive term rather than a general criterion—Summary—Conclusion.



## INTRODUCTION

### STATEMENT OF THESIS AND OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

The thesis which I wish to defend in the present essay is a very common one, believed, I think, by most people, but usually only approximately and only half-heartedly, and expressed vaguely if expressed at all. Some such belief is in fact present whenever we reflect upon acts that stir our interest; but the belief baldly expressed in propositions sounds fanciful or weak or sentimental, and we avoid pronouncing it clearly in much the same way as that in which we hurry over an expression in an unfamiliar language—partly from modesty, but mostly from fear of appearing ridiculous and from inner conviction of ignorance. Our belief, in other words, not only seems to us sentimental and weak when we approach the formulation of it in a creed, but it actually is sentimental and weak when thus formulated, and this for the reason that we have not taken the trouble to make the formulation accurate or definite. On the one hand we are afraid of seeming sentimental; on the other hand we do not know what our belief really is, nor what definite formula embodying it will stand the test of logical criticism.

My thesis, then, is such a belief formulated for criticism; it is simply that the interest that we take in the most utilitarian matters indicates an interest in ideals. This is not the same as saying, for instance, that our taking the trouble to get out of bed in the morning is a proof that the Kreutzer sonata is beautiful, much less that we should enjoy hearing the Kreutzer sonata performed. But its intention is not far from saying that in so far as we are interested in living at all we impute value to life, and that in order to preserve our intellectual integrity we shall find it hard to deny value to any sort of thing that has stirred

the interest of any human being. Moreover, I think that it can be made clear that our very interest, say in money itself, the symbol of the economically valuable, implies so-called higher interests on our part; that a consideration of the value which we put upon the most every-day utilities logically drives us to admit the value of the 'finest' of the fine arts. Not that every one who is capable of enjoying his breakfast is capable of enjoying poetry; but that every human being who reflects upon the matter must, by virtue of logical necessity, admit in the value of poetry, for example, a value which has at least as genuine and as distinct a reality as that of the value of nourishing food or warm bedding.

Perhaps some sorts of value are specifically different from others; perhaps also there is a scale of values; but the point that seems to me clearest and most important is that the so-called "sentimental" or "higher" values have as well defined a place, as clearly intelligible a being, as distinctly recognizable and necessary a function in human activity as have the most readily assented-to economic values. Furthermore, I should like to make clear that there is a sense in which it is necessary to admit that the very existence of these "lower" values as such depends upon the reality or the validity of "higher" values. Nor is the *sense* in which this is true that of an esoteric doctrine; it is that of logic itself, and to realize the truth in question requires only an open mind and a course of thought.

There is one other consideration to be taken into account immediately, however, in order to forestall a criticism which all thinking people would at once interject here. If the so-called "sentimental" values are by implication logically given a definite status by every one who can reflectively justify the raising of his hand, it does not therefore follow that all the mistaken fancies of men are to be respected, nor that every particular evaluation is valid, nor that the specious and the genuine are all one. In fact, if the "higher" values as such are a logical implication of granting the "lower," it may follow that they are to be criticized

much as the "lower" are criticized, that the intellect is capable of dealing with good works as it deals with useful articles, that works of the spirit are subject to a logical criticism of value as truly as works of the flesh, in short, that esthetic and ethical and religious values are to be judged or criticized on no more *esoteric* grounds—*complexity* of grounds is of course altogether another matter—than the worth of shoes or of tobacco.

My thesis is formulated, then, against all those who divide human activities off into exclusive departments: those who would insist that every man knows black from white or good from bad, but who think music and art, and perhaps even science, the cults of visionaries; those who laud scientific pursuits for their eminently useful practical application or their rigorous methods of verification, but who despise philosophy and general criticism on account of their supposed looseness or uselessness or arbitrariness; and finally those who respect the intellect and its logical standards, but who find no "reason in art," no logically sound standards which can be applied to taste or morals or religion.

The contention I make, put analytically, although of course briefly and inadequately, is (*a*) that recognition of economic values logically implies recognition of ethical, esthetic, and religious values, and indicates the dependence in this sense of the former upon the latter; (*b*) that all these values have a common nature and therefore a similar status in reality, which can be rigorously and clearly defined; and (*c*) that the so-called "higher" values are to be criticized by the same logical procedure as that which we apply in the case of the so-called "lower" values.

To demonstrate the truth of this contention in all its details is more than I can accomplish in full in this essay. I shall therefore limit myself arbitrarily in the case of the "higher" values to those called ethical and esthetic, and in the main shall keep to the latter. The actual body of the essay is to comprise the following chapters:

I. A historical account of the problem of value theory as it has occurred in my own intellectual experience. This account seems to me essential to an appreciation of the technical discussion which follows. It is true that any valid theory is independent of the particular examples of its workings; but value theory in its abstract and technical development has the appearance of being much more remote from human interests than it is. To indicate the genuineness of the problem involved and the intimate relations of more abstractly formulated conclusions to very concrete and apparently simple situations seems to me fully as important as the actual formulation of the theory itself. Without it the theory may appear meaningless.

II. An account of what I should call the value experience in a roughly introspective description, and of what I should call the judgment of value in terms of elementary logic. Since much of the discussion of value is made difficult and obscure by what would seem to be confusion of these two clearly distinguishable phases of our experience in connection with values and valuing, this preliminary discussion is introduced in the hope that the confusion may be avoided from the very first without any artificial abstraction or removal of either phase of the matter from its context, a context which usually, perhaps always, includes both phases.

III. A sketch of the findings of analytical psychology bearing upon the nature of value as defined in terms of interest. This is a more technical discussion, and while the considerations introduced may seem arbitrarily chosen, they seem to me to put value into a psychological context which offers a satisfactory basis for further development of the subject.

IV. A defense of the definition of value in terms of interest against the pragmatic theory of valuation or value-judgment as constitutive of value. This discussion is obviously called for, since, if the pragmatists are right, the definition given in III is quite beside the mark; since the intelligibility of both (*a*) and (*b*) of the thesis depends upon keeping clear a distinction which

the pragmatists confuse; and since in the view of the pragmatists the status of value is quite different from that which this essay exhibits.

V. A further examination of this definition of value in the light of the idealistic theory of value and value-judgment. This discussion attempts to show how far idealistic criticism of the definition points to an adequate theory of value, and in how far the idealistic neglect of the distinction between a *judgment of value* and an *experience of valuing* makes the whole idealistic theory of value unsatisfactory.

VI. An attempt to show that judgments concerning the values of the most ordinarily acknowledged sorts imply the existence or the reality of ethical and esthetic values, and that these latter values have a status no less clearly definable nor less "real" than that of the former. This discussion is obviously the making good of the chief contention of the thesis, and is the main objective of the previous discussion.

VII. An experimental study in which I shall try to show that the application of standards of esthetic value in literary criticism consists in essentially the same logical procedure as that employed in valuing the most ordinary economic commodities, and that this process is capable of giving equally valid and satisfactory results. This last section is, of course, an attempt to verify, as far as a few examples from one field could amount to verification, the assertion in (c) of the statement of the thesis.

## CHAPTER I

### THE QUESTION AS RAISED IN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

My interest in the problem of value as such grew out of difficulties with apparently inadequate standards of literary criticism. Obviously, however, this interest was not in the main a literary interest, and the questions that I had been trying to answer seemed not to be altogether germane to literary study. My first attempt at finding more reliable standards was by way of geographic, biological, and economic antecedents; but here a difficulty arose which seemed to me to suggest the need of philosophy rather than science. The difficulty is roughly this: "Antecedents" are said to "explain" Chaucer, for example, a biological and economic phenomenon; but Chaucer wrote unequal verse, and the interesting fact is not that Chaucer wrote verse but that much of this verse has been thought excellent.

Whether the *Canterbury Tales* are really precious or not, certainly they are humanly precious, or at least they have been thought by human beings to be precious. They have been *valued*, and still are valued. No doubt also they are generally valued more highly than some of the other works of Chaucer. The evidences are too numerous to cite and too obvious to need to be cited; they are suggested, for example, in the comments of critics and in the practice of teachers of English literature in selecting texts for study. The first fact, then, i.e., that the *Canterbury Tales* are valued, can scarcely be denied, and the second fact, i.e., that the *Canterbury Tales* are valued more highly than some other writings of Englishmen in the fourteenth century, or than some English writings of other centuries,

will be admitted. A third fact seems to me equally interesting, viz., that the *Prologue* of the *Canterbury Tales* is valued more highly than, say, the *Rhyme of Sir Thopas*. And I think that we might even admit that certain lines in the *Prologue* are more highly valued than others; certainly the general practice of choosing particular passages for quotation would indicate that this is the fact. The three facts now before us are three facts concerning values put upon literary work, and although economic or other antecedents might conceivably—would obviously—throw some light upon the particular examples I have used, it seems to me that such theories of antecedents, of causal historical determinants, have very little direct bearing on the points actually at issue in the present inquiry, viz., (1) the valuing of poetry in general as such, (2) the valuing of the poetry of one author or of one period above that of other authors or other periods, (3) the valuing of particular passages of poetry of one author above other passages of the same author.

There is not time here and it would not be to the point in the present essay to attempt a proof of this contention that the study of antecedents necessarily fails to solve the problem of values. The point has been made over and over again. It is clear in Socrates' famous allusion to Anaxagoras in the *Phaedo*, in Aristotle's discussion of causes in the first book of the *Metaphysics*, in modern criticism of evolutionism as philosophy,<sup>1</sup> and in the opponents of so-called scientific literary criticism.<sup>2</sup> The whole argument, it seems to me, amounts to saying that minds are actuated by purposes directed to the future, and that, since no description of the past includes all the particulars of the future, scientific explanation of the past is inadequate for the discussion of purpose. In other words, we may admit a complete determinism, but when we act, i.e., so long as we remain human beings, we are under what may indeed be called the *illusion of freedom*; an illusion which remains, however, the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g., Howison, *The Limits of Evolution*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ethel Puffer, *The Psychology of Beauty*, chap. 1.

central fact of conscious life, and which is therefore as real and as important as any fact whatever. Purpose grows out of the past, but it is consciously directed towards the future, and for us it is this conscious free direction of purpose that constitutes us moral beings and gives our lives value and content.

Anthropological investigation may prove to us that art had an origin of some sort, a non-esthetic origin, say; but we are interested in art as such just because it is that which offers human beings what seems to us a valuable experience. It is only such art as does give or has given this experience that we value, and it is only in so far as art is capable of giving this experience that we value it. What happened, genetically speaking, before art took on this character is not to the point. Geographic, biological, economic antecedents may offer causal explanations of the existence of objects which we now value; they can scarcely give any adequate account of the specific qualities which we value in those objects. Or, if they can, then esthetic value is merely a name for something else, and literary merit—purely literary—is an illusion or a disguise or a euphemism.

The function of the genetic explanation of values is like that of the mathematical study of music. It may be interesting and useful to know that the tonic vibrates twice while the dominant vibrates three times; but such a Pythagorean analysis gives not the slightest hint of the peculiar hollow sound of the consonance that we call a perfect fifth; and the most expert physicist may be completely lacking in musical appreciation. As the sound of a fifth is not a mathematical ratio, and as the knowledge of the physical nature of sound is entirely distinct from the hearing of consonances and dissonances, so the value of a work of art is not constituted by its biological or economic or other antecedents, and the knowledge of these antecedents is entirely distinct from the valuing of the work of art. The study of such valuing is itself a theoretical scientific matter, but it is not a matter of antecedents; it must be an account of just that element in experience which in the very nature of the case follows upon

and is other than its antecedents. This is the difference, as Croce says, between sweating and thinking, a difference more accurately and literally rendered, I think, in the contrasting terms structure and function, existence and purpose, reality and value, and brought into philosophical discussion under the heading of "mechanism vs. teleology."

It is important to see the hard and definite character, the apparently final nature of this situation: If esthetic values are to be explained away, then it would seem very probable that ethical values are also to be explained away; if beauty signifies accord with our physiological processes, then right signifies also some such accord—say with the tendency to advance our group interests. And in either case we are dropping out of experience and of our discussions of experience the very characteristic of that experience which we set out to discuss. If one explains *away* value, one *has not* removed it from experience, one has simply removed oneself from the object of one's search; the object is there just the same; such explanation is powerless against its ubiquity and its compulsion.

The clearest presentation of the situation and of this apparent inadequacy of explanations in terms of antecedents is to be found in examples from everyday experience, our own individual experience being the nearest source. But such purely introspective analysis as this would involve is less striking evidence of the problem than is the analysis of the written records of such unconscious and disinterested subjects as literary critics or philosophical students of morality or of ethics. Obviously the interest of such writers is not primarily esthetic in the one case or primarily moral in the other. The literary critic must already have *had* the esthetic experience; his criticism is in some sense or other the later record of this previous experience. So with the student of ethics; he is commenting upon moral experience, and he must have passed this experience in review before his comment can be intelligent or to the point. The implications of what may be called these secondary

experiences reveal the force of some of the difficulties that have led to thinking of values as a central philosophical problem.

Let us now take two or three such representative statements. Here is a sentence from Windelband: “The compelling power which Kant’s philosophy gained over the hearts and minds of men was due chiefly to the earnestness and greatness of its ethical conception of the world.”<sup>3</sup> So anti-ethical a philosopher as Bertrand Russell<sup>4</sup> explicitly values the ethical work of Spinoza, indeed grants it “immeasurable” value, in spite of its lack of significance for “scientific” philosophy; and this value, he says, belongs with practice and not with theory. It is common, at least among university lecturers, to give a survey of an ethical or metaphysical system, to point out its logical fallacies and weaknesses, and then, in passing, to praise the nobility, the greatness, the practical value, the human significance of the very system that has just been shown to be superseded or even hopelessly unfounded in logic or inadequate to the facts. Theoretically defective, practically valuable—as if somehow the theoretical defects in a theory were not ultimately the important point. What student of philosophy has not heard Aristotle seriously expounded in a course of lectures, only to find out at the close that the lecturer, in spite of all the magnificent architecture of the scheme, in spite too of all the weaknesses he may have pointed out in the theory itself as leading to Aristotle’s conclusions, or the inadequacy of the conclusions to the situation, ends with an appreciation of the greatness of Aristotle’s mind or a scathing condemnation of Aristotle for the unpardonable sin of pronouncing certain that of which he had no adequate knowledge?

These are valuings, positive or negative. What is their basis? Certainly the basis is not theoretical in the ordinary sense; for the appreciation or the condemnation is somehow added; it is distinctly *obiter dictum*. It is not part of the critical discussion

<sup>3</sup> Windelband, *History of Philosophy*, p. 573. Translated by Tufts.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Scientific Method in Philosophy*, Lecture 1, pp. 26 ff.

of the philosophical system in question; it comes from the authority vested in the critic. And one must ask whence this authority is derived. What right has the critic to put practical value upon the theoretical work of Aristotle or Spinoza or Kant?

To me it seems clear that such estimates of practical value either belie the theoretical conclusions of their authors or are simply otherwise derived than from the logical considerations which suffice as bases for the theoretical discussion. In fact, all these judgments are judgments of ethical value, and coming as they do from the most sophisticated sources they are fairly clear evidence that the problem of ethical values has not been emphatically enough defined even for the most modern thinking. Or it may perhaps be put better thus: The question of values is simply the reappearance of one of the fundamental difficulties of philosophy, and it offers a new line of fortifications for our attack. We conclude our studies of the "great" ethical theorists with the pronouncing of an ethical judgment upon their work, which judgment, instead of being a conclusion from our studies, itself implies a different and apparently a more fundamental basis in our thinking. We find Aristotle and Spinoza and Kant all sadly lacking, but we have somehow the assurance that they were essentially right, essentially noble, essentially great; that their work is essentially valuable. Indeed we express our assurance in a value-judgment, and thus the problem of Aristotle and Spinoza and Kant is before us in our own thinking, and we begin laboriously to discuss what we now call the theory of value.

At this point, of course, various sorts of naturalistic answers may be offered. It may be said that our lecturer looks upon Aristotle's ethics as in itself ethically valuable just because the history of our planet and of the human race, the particular surroundings of the lecturer, his training, all the influences that have gone to mold his mind have a general tendency with which Aristotle's principles in part agree. It is this agreement with his own biological, economic, social, or other interests that the lecturer is expressing, and his terms of praise, which involve

the attribution of moral value to Aristotle's work, are mere euphemisms. That this is an inadequate account of the matter is suggested by the fact that it gives absolutely no account of the moral categories themselves. Why should naturally developing creatures attempt to disguise their own natures from themselves? And how could the concept of morality or of the right ever have entered their minds? This, however, is a matter for later consideration; I am at present only trying to make clear what the problem of values is in the two very familiar aspects in which it has been forced upon me most definitely. But, before I give any illustrations of esthetic value, I wish to go one step further in stating the problem presented by the examples I have already given of the ethical aspect of the question.

The mere fact that we do judge Aristotle's mind or Spinoza's character or Kant's work valuable to human beings in general, or to ourselves in particular, gives us no immediate information as to the nature of ethical value or as to the further disturbing questions *about* the nature of ethical value, whether, that is, there are absolute values, whether valuing is a psychological activity *endowing* its objects with value—in this case, of course, what would be termed by many philosophers merely “relative” value—or whether on the contrary valuing implies somehow a substantive value which is merely acknowledged by the valuing subject, an objective, superpersonal, real, ultimate, “absolute” value, which demands our valuing activity as its just and proper due. Is value, in other words, like that external compulsion which seems to characterize reality itself? Is value forced upon us like the ratio of a diameter to a circumference? Is value, to use Berkeley's phrasing, like the ideas of God, which we as lesser minds must accept and admit? Or is value dependent upon our individual human natures? Is it merely the further end, so to speak, of a relation established by our emotional consciousness, a transitory variable depending both for its existence and for its magnitude on human minds in particular human

situations? But these considerations must also be the matter of a later chapter, and before I proceed to them I wish to present the other aspect of the problem of value with which this essay is concerned; I wish to give some further illustrations of the case of esthetic values, particularly of literary values.

The difficulty here is not to find, but out of a great number to choose, a few statements that are representative and at the same time disinterested—disinterested in the sense that their authors are not attempting to answer questions about the theory of value or the facts of valuing, representative in that they *are* trying to make satisfactory value-judgments, as it is the ultimate business of criticism to do. It will be noticed in both the examples that I offer here (1) that the pronouncing of value-judgments is the paramount interest of the writer and (2) that either explicitly or implicitly the writer refers to literary value as to an ultimate or absolute to which he pays only a proper respect in the very highest and most rigorous exercise of his mental—or perhaps what he would call his *spiritual*—powers.

In the introduction to his *Shakespearean Tragedy* Mr. A. C. Bradley asserts clearly that his purpose is analytic interpretation, but that this also implies value-judgment is obvious from the fact that he thinks his book worth writing and that the end of all his study is to be the more “adequate” reading of the plays—*adequate*, one may suppose, to their value. He also speaks in this same introduction of *judging* plays, and this in such a way as implies that the work of criticism involves judgment as its primary purpose. Certainly, at any rate, no one will question the fact that he does judge the plays on the basis of his analytic interpretation, and that his judgment is a new and convincing statement of the value-judgment of a great number of human beings. Mr. Bradley is plainly moved by the greatness of these tragedies, by the “value” of Shakespeare’s view of the world as embodied in dramatic form. He speaks of the greatness of *Lear*, of the “value for imagination” of certain qualities of the play. He considers *Lear* as drama and

as poetry, and he finds that its "total result is one such that we feel a consciousness of greatness in pain, solemnity in the mystery we cannot fathom!" The *value* of *Lear* is thus given in so many words, and the pronouncing of such a judgment as shall not only express the fact that the play has value but also name the particular value that the play has, is the climax and the end of the analytic interpretation, which is the professed purpose of the study.

From the same author's first lecture in his *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* we find that he distinguishes a purely literary quality as the value that literature primarily has. Thus one of the most satisfactory of modern literary critics gives us in his work examples of value-judgments which not only express the fact that we value esthetically but as clearly imply that our value-judgments have reference to objective value. The question as to the nature of this objectivity—the relativity or the absoluteness, the dependence or the independence of this particular sort of value—is not explicitly raised; but that there is for this critic a unique quality or character that constitutes the value of poetry as poetry or literature as literature, and that the adequate reading of literature *renders* this value to us, seems to me a fair statement. I should suppose that Mr. Bradley is a Platonist in the sense of feeling that this valuing of poetry as poetry is significant because it really is a human reference to the supersensible reality. But in any case the critical studies cited furnish us with suggestive illustrations of the esthetic aspect of the problem of value.

I have chosen one other illustration of esthetic valuation from Professor Saintsbury, a critic who does not take philosophy or esthetics too seriously, and who would certainly not find it in his province to discuss the nature of esthetic value. That esthetic value exists in the particular aspect of literary quality he asserts over and over again, however, and his criticism aims at pronouncing some sort of judgment upon the work of any author considering it purely as literature. Moreover, in some

of his critical and historical writings he makes his position in this respect perfectly clear. I will quote a few sentences:

“Whether, however, *Vathek* had been written in three days, or three weeks, or three months, or three years, its literary value would be affected not one jot.”<sup>5</sup>

“Chaucer is the earliest English poet who can, without reservations and allowances, be called great, and what is more, one of our greatest, even to the present day.”<sup>6</sup>

“The *Faerie Queene* is the . . . best of Spenser’s work.”<sup>7</sup>

“Poetry, in the strict and rare sense, Swift seldom . . . touches.”<sup>8</sup>

“When Wordsworth writes

. . . The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion:

or

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,

even Shakespeare, even Shelley, have little more of the echoing detonation, the auroral light, of true poetry. No third poet in English . . . has anything that comes near them, though Spenser from this point of view must . . . be put above Wordsworth.”<sup>9</sup>

“The criticism that will be dealt with here is that function of the judgment which busies itself with the goodness or badness, the success or ill-success, of literature from the purely literary point of view.”<sup>10</sup>

“He [the true critic] endeavors . . . to extract from *all* literature . . . lessons of its universal qualities, which may enable him to see each period *sub specie aeternitatis*.”<sup>11</sup>

“Some form of the Ideal Theory is indeed necessary to the critic; the beauty of literature is hardly accessible, except to one who is more or less a Platonist.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Camb. Hist. Eng. Lit.*, XI, 321.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 661.

<sup>6</sup> *Short Hist. Eng. Lit.*, p. 130.

<sup>10</sup> *Hist. of Criticism*, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 350.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The real business of the critic is to look at "the intrinsic value of poetry, its connection with beauty, its importance to the free adult human spirit."<sup>13</sup>

Three points are to be noticed here especially: (1) The critic makes it his business to judge; (2) what he judges is literary value; (3) this value is conceived as objective. The kind of objectivity is also hinted at in the passage as to the Platonic qualification of the competent critic, but this need not concern us until later.

To any one at all acquainted with critical writing it must seem superfluous to offer evidence such as I have been giving of the valuing activity in which critics engage. It is this essential passing of judgment concerning values that has made criticism proverbially despised. It is the fact that the critic judges that stirs the resentment of the author judged. It is not so much the unfair judging as it is the presumption which takes upon itself to judge at all, that the creative genius, conscious of his own superiority, bitterly scores and jealously resents. There have been critics, of course, like those of German Romanticism, who have sought to avoid this judging; there has been the great French school of "scientific" critics, from Taine to Brunetière, with its theoretical condemnation of such judgment in criticism. But the complete failure to avoid judgment when one writes criticism is clear in Taine himself (one has only to notice, for example, the epithets which he applies to Tennyson); and lectures on economic or other antecedents of literary works have a characteristically disparaging tone that can scarcely be interpreted except as the passing of judgment. Indeed the very attempt to explain away literary or artistic values is itself most likely to be actuated by a motive which follows upon a previous value-judgment, more or less explicitly admitted—a judgment that many of the accepted works of art are of doubtful value, i.e., are *negatively* valuable in that they are the products of

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<sup>13</sup> *Hist. of Criticism*, p. 19.

misspent energies or are expressive of deplorable tendencies in individuals or races or epochs.

This setting forth of the problem of the theory of value may seem very loose and casual; but it seems to me fair to present the question as it has actually occurred in my own reflective experience, and without rather full illustration this is unnecessarily difficult. The problem as I see it arises out of the fact that we find ourselves valuing acts and character on the one hand and what we may call esthetic objects on the other. Such valuing, when explicit, takes the form of a value-judgment—an ethical or an esthetic judgment. We judge one act successful as an act, *right*, another the contrary; we judge one poem successful as a poem, *beautiful* in some sense or other of the word, another not. And in doing so we are *valuing* the act or the poem. We thus have before us for consideration (a) a valuing, (b) the logical expression of this valuing in a proposition, and (c) the *matter* of this judgment, its existential import. Does it impute real value? If so, what does real value mean in this case? Or are we here asking a foolish question, and is the whole matter settled in the imputation itself? Is our imputation of value the ultimate source of value? Are values objectively imposed upon us? Or is value a special sort of quality existing *in* the object but existing only by virtue of the fact that the object be in relation to a valuing subject?

The fundamental nature of the question seems to me clear from the above statement. Any adequate answer must consider the nature of consciousness, the nature of judgment, the possibility of knowledge, the bases of ethical theory, and the nature of esthetics. Not that this essay is to set all these matters straight, but that, being as it is professedly philosophical, it need not pretend to be able to avoid the very questions to which we all give answers by implication in our most casual opinions and our most ordinary purposes and activities.

## CHAPTER II

### PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF THE EXPERIENCE OF VALUING AND THE LOGIC OF VALUE JUDGMENTS

Before attempting any investigation of the theory of value it is requisite that the experience to which such investigation must finally refer for empirical content or meaning be clearly before us. There is, in fact, the greatest danger in such discussion not so much that we shall neglect to define terms as that we may forget the full meaning and reference of these terms after they are defined. However satisfying it may be to proceed along a series of more or less demonstrated propositions to a more or less demonstrated conclusion, this procedure is apt to be of very little use in illuminating a situation if the situation itself is not uniformly and clearly present in the mind of whoever is discussing it. Such an investigator is likely to arrive with much apparent success at definite conclusions; but the conclusions may still fail to carry conviction or to touch upon the vital issues with reference to which the investigation arose.

The only possible account of experience must of course be drawn from experience itself, and we get experience only in the first person. I will not apologize, therefore, for introducing an introspective account of what I think may properly be called the consciousness of value into a presumably rational philosophical essay. I can not find that the most abstract or "objective" treatment ever really succeeds in avoiding this its necessary source. Most of the disguises under which personal experience masquerades—as a superpersonal logic, for example, or a transcendental philosophy, or a purely experimental psychology—seem to me to be not only to a certain extent dangerously confusing to the readers—to whom they are not transparent—but

almost certainly fatal to the genuine continuity of discourse, if not to the intellectual integrity, of the writer, to whom they are apparently completely opaque.

My two tasks for the present chapter are: (1) to describe the consciousness of value, and at the same time to distinguish at least two kinds of value, which may appropriately be called respectively ethical and esthetic; (2) to give an elementary account of the logic arising out of this situation when it is made articulate in judgments. This is of course an arbitrary limitation of the discussion; but conclusions which are sound within these limitations are all that the present essay hopes to achieve.

The preceding chapter indicated the sort of instances in which such value-judgments are made; and at the same time showed, I think, that in these cases the judgment does not rest for its validity on its immediate usefulness as an instrument to action. To say and at the same time to mean that a particular act was noble, or that a particular performance of a symphony was beautiful, in both cases implies at the least that a past event in my experience is being recorded in my mind as valuable. And it would seem also to be the case in both these instances that, when it has gone so far, my mental activity rests. Enumeration of the act may be as utterly out of the question as my own composing or performing of the symphony. It is true that my attribution of value may—*must*, I should suppose—have some bearing on my past and some influence on my future valuing activity—in the way of giving it practice, say; it may also modify my standards of value, it may enlarge my conception of the valuable; but it would seem not to be instrumental, in the sense of being one stage in a process from a thought-provoking situation through a judgment (in this case a value-judgment) to the performance of an act—the making of a further judgment, for example.

It might at first seem indeed that these judgments, concerned as they are with the irrevocable past, could not possibly have any interest of any sort for me, that they could not properly

be called value-judgments at all. What if Socrates *did* drink poison? What if Orion *was* beautiful *last night*? But the fact seems to be that the import of such judgments interests me very much. If Socrates' act in 399 B.C. was not noble, human life, my own life in particular, seems to me less worth while. If Orion was not beautiful last night, not only my senses but my judgment has deceived me, and I must be sceptical as to the very existence of beauty. The value-judgments do, it seems, express the fact that I actually attribute real value to certain so-called moral acts and certain so-called esthetic experiences. But it remains to show what this statement means; and first of all, having limited ourselves to two sorts of experience, we must make clear just what these two experiences are.

This may perhaps be done by distinguishing them from other experiences of the same general sort which are even more familiar. Many of us at least fancy that we recognize esthetic values; all of us recognize economic values, or at least utilities. And it may be as distinguished from these utility-values that what have traditionally been called the higher values most clearly reveal their essential nature. These higher values may be religious, ethical, social, esthetic; but we are concerned only with esthetic and ethical values. It is with this limitation that we are treating of value at all.

To take a case that offers itself at once: My typewriter is said to be worth so many dollars. At least I paid so many dollars for it, because that was the price set and because I thought that the typewriter would be worth having at that price. I do not enjoy using the typewriter—it is merely a means to an end; I want to be able to put what I write into such form that it can be conveniently and rapidly read. It is to *this* end that the typewriter is valuable to me as a means. The whole situation is very familiar. I value the typewriter. By implication I value the production of steel and iron, rubber and ink; the labor of men in mines and factories, of teachers in commercial schools, of printers and paper makers; of engineers and

inventors; and so on into the endlessly interrelated world of useful activities. But all these values are relative to each other, and they are moreover relative to other sorts of value. In fact they are valuable finally only as means toward the "good life." It is this "good life" that we ultimately value, even if we find it itself valuable only as a means to a better life hereafter. But for those of us whose interests end with this human life itself, and for all of us, I suppose, in some pretty clear sense, the good life is an end. What interests us most of all, therefore, is the content, the components, the constituents of this good life. And we value these contents themselves more highly than any subsidiary means thereto. We may value them more than life itself, as obviously Socrates did, as all the most admired of our heroes do; and we may call them, figuratively perhaps, but with the consent of ordinary usage, the ultimate values, meaning by *values* simply what we think worth while, and altogether begging the question of the nature of what we thus ultimately value.

To learn more about the nature of our values in the sense of *value* just noted we may turn again to our individual experience. Any one, I suppose, values what we call the moral character of Socrates. All of us agree, that is, that Socrates was what we call a great man. In particular, all of us think of Socrates' refusal to save himself from death as a noble act; thinking thus is placing ethical value on the act; it implies the consciousness of ethical value in us; it is, when formulated in words, the pronouncing of an ethical value-judgment. It may here be objected that as we value a typewriter for its service to an ulterior end, so we value Socrates' life, and in particular the manner of his death, as serving to point out a satisfactory mode of procedure, or as suggesting to us an ideal of conduct, or as pleasing to our pride in the possibilities of human nature—as in one of many ways a means to an ulterior end. But even if we should grant this, the fact remains that Socrates' act serves us in so definitely different a manner from that in which the typewriter serves us or that in which the African rubber

gatherers serve us—the manner is so different as to be appropriately designated *absolutely* different—this expression in any more literal sense being fairly meaningless. Thus the difference between ethical value and utility-value is that what has the latter sort of value is always, as an economic good, only relatively valuable; that which has ethical value, while it is also (or at least may be considered to be) valuable *relatively*, is not judged primarily in relation to other values at all, and never in relation to other merely relative values. Ethical value can not be measured in terms of economic goods or even in terms of ethical goods. It is valuable simply as being constitutive of the ultimately valuable, as being part of what goes to make up that which we think of as ultimately worth while. It is, in other words, not a means but an end.

But even ethically valuable acts seem, too, to be means in a special way of their own; for we do acknowledge, when we praise Socrates, that his act is good, i.e., of the sort to be emulated. It also furnishes us with a criterion of ethical value, and perhaps enlarges our idea of the possibilities of ethical value. From this point of view, in fact, the whole value of Socrates may be said to be that he exemplifies the good life in a high degree, and that for us now this is his only value. But this point of view apparently shuts off a perspective in which we simply contemplate Socrates' act with satisfaction. And it is in just this perspective that *Socrates* means the protagonist of *The Apology*, the *Crito*, and the *Phaedo*; that Socrates becomes an object of esthetic rather than ethical value-judgment. Ethically valuable is Socrates' act in refusing to obey his daemon; esthetically valuable is the Socrates of *The Apology* to whom we listen in rapt attention. The ethically valuable act is a model for us to follow; in so far, indeed, Socrates is a means to an end, albeit a universal, ethical end. But the esthetically valuable creation of Plato is an object of contemplation pure and simple. In fact, it is only as we reach the stage of esthetic contemplation that the object of thought has value no longer as means at all,

but solely as end. Esthetic value, in a fuller sense even than ethical value, belongs to the realm of ends. Both are clearly enough distinguished from utility values, which are such only as they serve towards ends, and which always ultimately serve ethical or esthetic ends, ends of a higher order, so to speak. Objects of ethical value, if they *are* means, are means to ethical ends, not to ends of a higher order—unless, indeed, as ethically valuable, they become the objects of esthetic contemplation, and thus force us to call esthetic ends a still higher order, to which ethically valuable objects as such may be subsidiary.

Esthetic objects are valuable in themselves, simply as such objects, and whenever an object becomes valuable simply as object—out of all other relations but that of its *objectivity*—it is esthetic value that it possesses. If there is one mark of the esthetic consciousness that is definite and pronounced, it is the intrinsic or isolated nature of the experience. It is in fact this intrinsic value of esthetic experience, this resting in itself, that blinds philosophers, as well as the rest of those who look down upon art as more or less admissible trifling, to the truth that esthetic values are values at all. And this in face of the fact that the very ethical acts that we prize most highly, as soon as they are valued solely for their intrinsic ethical quality, become objects of just what we mean by esthetic contemplation. When anything becomes valued not as one stage in a process, nor as one of a series of conditions, our consciousness of it takes on those characteristics which theorists unanimously make the constituent moments of the esthetic consciousness; and thus esthetically valuable objects are *the* objects of value-judgments *par excellence*, and for this very reason are often not grasped theoretically as valuable at all.

All this may sound dogmatic and speculative. It purports, however, to be nothing more than the report of individual experience. The more general phrasing is used as further characterizing the experience in question, the very essence of which

seems to be that, to use Kant's terms, it pronounces itself "universal and necessary." When I call the symphony beautiful, I mean that it is of such a nature that any listener must have felt enough as I felt to agree with me in calling it beautiful, would he only be fully receptive and open-minded. And so when I speak of *our* valuing the Socrates of *The Apology* in a particular way, I mean that *I* value this Socrates, and that I cannot conceive of a disinterested human being who should read *The Apology* without appreciating, essentially as I do, this esthetic object. I may be wrong in this judgment, but as Kant pointed out long ago, I can not make myself think that I am wrong here, for it is the very nature of the value-judgment to feel itself universally binding. Thus it is the part of honesty not to conceal this weakness, especially if it is really the only source of strength. It is after all only one form of the very presupposition I make when I expect my words to be read or my thought to be followed; and it would seem to me foolish and perhaps misleading not to make explicit acknowledgment of it.

The present chapter has simply attempted, then, to give a descriptive account of the valuing activity; and, while the terms have not been technically psychological, the account will serve, I think, as a basis for further discussion. I have merely tried to make plain the experiential content to which the term *valuing* is to have reference throughout this essay. That this is not the same content as is referred to by many writers on the theory of value; that it has various relations to such contents, etc., etc., are matters to be considered later. For the present we are to attempt a brief and elementary logical analysis of the value-judgment; and with these two items before us we may proceed to more accurate construction and more specific criticism.

Kant has, I think, clearly given the typical form of the value-judgment. The expression of being conscious of value is the judgment that an act is right or that an object is beautiful. The meaning of this ethical judgment is elaborated in Kant's ethical theory; the logical implications of the esthetic judgment

give rise directly to most of the *Critique of Judgment*; and it would perhaps be as enlightening to study some of the sections of Kant's work as to attempt a more independent investigation. But this would require a great deal of preliminary discussion, and Kant has been annotated and commented into such varied import that to employ his terms, not to mention his doctrines, would rather introduce confusion into the subject than help set it in order. However that may be, our starting point is essentially that of Kant in the third critique; and if we have any success, it will be largely due to his pointing out this road as the direct one to the center of the difficulty.

The actual logic of the situation seems at first sight not to be very complex. The two propositions appear to be simple enough, and formally, no doubt, they are so. Their existential import, however, is quite another matter. For the proposition, *This act is right*, offers no clue to the meaning of *act* or the meaning of *right*, except as it relates them to each other as subject and predicate. So with the other judgment—the esthetic object as such is no more the merely physical object than Socrates' *moral* act was the mere putting of the cup to his lips and the swallowing of the poison. Moreover, the predicates are even less informing; for the only subjects of which right (in the moral sense) can be predicated, are precisely morally right acts, and the only beautiful objects are just those objects of the esthetic value-judgment that we can place as subject of *are* when we use *beautiful* as predicate. Both judgments appear to be the barest, most formal tautologies, and both are thus nice examples of the difficulty of judgment in general, viz., that it is always either false or else tautological and thus meaningless. The ways out of this dilemma are not far to seek in the multifarious paths of modern logical investigation; but all I wish to do for the present is to make a few remarks on a simple Aristotelian basis.

In the first place as to the difficulty itself, if ethical and esthetic value-judgments are meaningless, so are all judgments, and on this score we need have no more misgivings as to the

existence of goodness and beauty than we have as to the existence of the objects of our external world in general or as to the existence of *any* useful object. In the second place this old dilemma as to all judgments is not one to concern us, for there is clearly something wrong in the analysis. The falsity of all judgments leaves the word *false* without meaning, and it is easy to show the absurdity of the other horn of the dilemma as to tautology or meaninglessness. Rational discourse does have meaning; it is the embodiment of what we mean by the word. But the very unit of rational discourse is the judgment, and to call judgment meaningless is thus a contradiction. If judgment is meaningless, then the word *meaning* no longer means what we use it to mean; and in general there is no use in talking, except perhaps for the purposes of physical exercise. Possibly this is just what human life is, a sort of motion; but human beings can not think so, and they do not mean any such merely physical activity when they speak of human life, especially when they explicitly make value-judgments. As to the tautological nature of judgments in general, this needs only to be noted to be acceptable—as far as it has any meaning. If knowledge is a complete system, then to know the whole would be to see existence *sub specie aeternitatis*, and there would be no judgments to make; existence itself would be tautological and time would disappear. But this would seem to mean just nothing at all, and at any rate we are speaking of what can not possibly be any concern of human beings. The simple fact that we do make judgments about temporal existences remains, and tautology, in any proper or intelligible sense of the word, characterizes judgments which seem to us *not* to predicate anything of the subject. *Tautological* thus characterizes one sort of judgment, and its very meaning depends upon there being judgments which in this sense are not tautological, this sense being the only one in which *tautological* means anything at all. To call all judgments tautological is thus itself altogether without meaning.

And now that we have avoided this artificial dilemma in its own quibbling fashion, let us see whether we can refute it by a more substantial argument, in its direct bearing upon the value-judgments that we are investigating. To call such judgments meaningless involves us in the real difficulty to which this essay addresses itself. For if ethical and esthetic value-judgments are either false or else tautological and meaningless (i.e., not judgments at all, but mere repetitions of names), then there is no element of meaning left in ethics or esthetics; there are no such things as moral or esthetic values. If nothing can be called right or beautiful (i.e., if no value-judgments of the sort can be made), if *right* and *beautiful* can not be used as predicates in assertions that say something and mean something, then they are not of any use at all to us; they should be removed from our vocabularies, and such terms should be substituted as would offer a means of making valid assertions in the situation already illustrated so often in this essay, and described in the first part of this chapter as value-consciousness. We have refuted the logical quibble about judgment in general; we have not by any means proved that value-judgments are valid or even that they can have meaning.

Let us turn at once, then, to a consideration of some of the suggestions for improving our vocabulary, so to speak; and first of all, let us turn to psychology, which would seem to offer the kind of improvement that we are seeking.

### CHAPTER III

## AN ACCOUNT OF VALUE AS INTEREST IN TERMS OF PSYCHOLOGY

When we do turn to psychology for help, inevitable as the appeal is, we still do not find a very clear answer. The psychological school of value theorists have, in fact, done little, as psychologists, to throw light on our questions. We are seeking the place or function of value and valuation in our world of experience, particularly in two regions of this world which are indicated when we say that we wish to know what we really mean by praising a book, pronouncing it satisfactory, i.e., valuable, and what we mean by pronouncing a man's act noble, i.e., valuable (apparently in another field). Obviously these pronouncements are both records of our experience (of the book or of the act) and estimates with an at least apparent reference to some standard or other, the origin and nature of this standard being matters for further question. To get any adequate idea then of our meaning, we shall have (1) to know what the original experience is upon which our explicit judgment follows; (2) to examine the experience which is constituted in the judgment itself; and (3) to consider the remaining problem of the implications of the judgment, involving, one would suppose, a reference to a standard, a standard which must be at least in so far logical as it constitutes the criterion of the truth of a judgment—the *logical* entity in question. The question at which we had really arrived in the preceding pages is (2) above, namely, the question as to the nature of the judging experience itself when we are judging values. But it is obvious, I think, that in so far as this is an act of judgment, it is like other acts of judgment. In so far as it is a judgment of *value*, we are led

to enquire as to the nature of value itself, the subject-matter of the judgment. According to the traditional classification of judgments, then, we are not dealing with a specific type of formal judgment at all, but simply with a specific sort of material, namely, what we may loosely call *value*. Since we are interested in our *meaning*, however, when we make the judgment, we must investigate that reality, if it turn out to be a reality, to which our judgment refers. What then is value?

It is with this question that the psychological investigators<sup>14</sup> begin; and, although the ground of value is not agreed upon among them, whether, that is, value is based upon feeling, or desire, dispositional or in action, still in their definitions and by means of the critical study of these definitions, we find a more or less general agreement that value is the fulfillment of interest.<sup>15</sup> As would be expected, a psychological investigation finds value in consciousness—whether a truly *empirical* investigation finds it there or not is another question. But waiving the claims of a more radical empiricism, and taking the definition as given, what does it tell us?

It would seem to give us *psychological* information and to make *psychological* reference. For interest would seem to name the attitude of a conscious organism towards that part of its environment that it selects to react upon, and the reactions of a conscious organism are certainly in large part determined by its built-up constitution. Evidently I value *prima facie* what suits me, and just as evidently I value in the long run what suits me in the long run. Leaving out entirely the question of value *in general*, we at least find that particular valuations depend upon the constitution of particular human minds, and more specifically upon particular human characteristics—the constitution of particular dispositions, the nature of particular desires.

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<sup>14</sup> Such as Ehrenfels, Meinong, and Urban.

<sup>15</sup> See Ralph Barton Perry, "The Definition of Value," *Jour. of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, XI, 141.

These characteristics have been explicitly discussed as constituting value by a group of authors, who, while they are not always in close agreement, seem, in so far as they treat of value at all in their investigations, to follow the same general direction. Their psychology, like other psychologies, may be said to assume uncritically a metaphysics and an epistemology. But it may be doubted, I think, whether one can so much as pronounce a single sentence of any sort of discourse without doing as much; and since this is the case even in the most careful attempts *not* to make assumptions, in the case, that is, of the very bases of the most "fundamental" criticism of psychology, one may as well make the minimum psychological assumptions, and come to any necessary revision of them later. In fact, we have no doubt made such a number of interrelated and heaped-up assumptions that we have as much warrant for proceeding on the grounds of careful introspection as on any other ground, perhaps more.

Let us turn then to the constitution of value as seen in general outline by Ribot, Shand, McDougall, and Stout. The fundamentally important ideas here are Shand's conception of the sentiments and Ribot's conception of what he chooses to call the "judgment" of value.

The passages that make this connection between interest and value through the conception of the sentiments are brief and simple. According to Stout,<sup>16</sup> who credits this conception to Shand, the child's interest in his mother as the source of satisfactions generates an interest in his mother herself and all her activities. This organized interest, based on emotional experiences centering about one object, is a sentiment, and all sentiments "involve the valuing of an object for its own sake and not merely for advantages derivable from it."<sup>17</sup> *Valuing* is thus having a more or less permanent interest in; having a sentiment "directed toward" an individual, a social group, or a

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<sup>16</sup> G. F. Stout, *The Groundwork of Psychology*, pp. 221 ff.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

"general aspect of the life of the self," such as love of order, devotion to art, detestation of servility.<sup>18</sup>

In this conception of the sentiments, as suggested by Shand, adopted by Stout and McDougall, and developed and applied in Shand's *The Foundations of Character*, we find some help in describing the experiences we pass in review when we judge that a person or a book is admirable. In the light of Shand's doctrine of the sentiments our admiration is explained by the fact that our interests have become organized about certain individuals or certain aspects of our experience and that the person or the book in question seems to us to further these organized interests, if only by implying on the part of the person judged or in the book a sentiment directed towards the same object or aspect of experience. We value Socrates' act in so far, and only as *adequately* as we have a sentiment like his which we may call 'hatred of injustice.'<sup>19</sup> We value Chaucer's poetry in so far as it is successful in expressing the various sentiments (in this technical sense of the word) that we sympathize with and grasp as being somehow allied to our own.

In what sense all this is true is quite another matter; but that here is an organized, satisfactory account of our experience with which it is hard to differ, I think must be granted. And in that case any criticism, no matter how fundamental, must interpret this account, just as the most sophisticated theory of reality must take into account, and fail if it can not take into account, our seeing tables and chairs in a classroom. We must start from experience, and I should claim for the conception of the sentiments that it is a sound rendering of experience to be criticized entirely on its merits as such, and that it does not stand or fall with the destruction or maintenance of such theoretical absurdities as it may even professedly be built upon. No one with the least sense of humor can take altogether seriously, I should suppose, the psychologist's theorizing about

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

psychology as we find it for instance in the early chapters of the very book I have been quoting; but to discard later chapters *in toto* on the ground that the early chapters involve theoretical absurdities is like refusing to take into account the law of gravitation because you think Newton's conception of space and time inadequate.

Ribot's conception of a judgment of value is neither so clear nor so empirically satisfying as Shand's or Stout's conception of the sentiments. Value for Ribot is defined in a larger theoretical scheme which he calls the logic of the feelings. This, he says, is constituted "principally" of values, i.e., "concepts or judgments varying according to the dispositions of feeling and of will."<sup>20</sup> The purpose of this "logic of the feelings" is always the establishing of an opinion or a belief, and it begins with the opinion to be established and justifies it by a "synthesis of these values" which "takes on the appearance and gives the illusions of a demonstration."<sup>21</sup>

Ribot's concept of a "synthesis of values" is not very clear, but the procedure which he is describing is familiar as that of the rhetorician or orator as distinguished from that of the philosopher or reasoner; and it may very well be the character of *most* of our so-called reasoning. It throws little light, however, on our problem of the nature of value, excepting as a description in not altogether unambiguous terms of one of the experiences which pretends to be the *founding* of a judgment of value, but which seems to be nothing more than the *assuming* of values, and a more or less unscrupulous justifying of our judgment that they are acceptable.

But Ribot in a later study defines judgment of value as "the logical operation which is at the bottom of all passion."<sup>22</sup> It contains two elements, he says, "the one intellectual, the other emotional, the agreement of which varies in degree and in importance according to the particular cases."<sup>23</sup> "The action

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<sup>20</sup> Ribot, *Logique des Sentiments*, p. 61.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>22</sup> *Essai sur les Passions*, p. 36.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

of this judgment of value is to reinforce the affective element in the states of consciousness called out by circumstances, and to carry along in a single current those which will serve the purpose of the fixed idea.<sup>24</sup> The purport of this is not very different from Stout's statement that "interest progressively defines itself in cognition, and in defining itself transforms itself."<sup>25</sup> But certainly, also, it is not clearer nor more illuminating, and it adds the confusion involved in finding a logical operation at the bottom of all "passion," which logical operation itself has both an intellectual and an *emotional* element. Obviously *logical* for Ribot is applicable not merely to *intellectual* operations; and this seems to me rather a confusing use of terms than the necessary expression of an insight into the nature of the mental activities in question.

But, dismissing this confusion as one which we shall have to deal with in another form when we consider the "judgment of practice," of the pragmatists, and remarking that Ribot uses Dewey's form of statement of value-judgment to give the "*conclusion from a series of value-judgments*,"<sup>26</sup> we may at least note that Ribot corroborates in part the notion that value is another name for interests, whether organized into sentiments or not. In fact he comes very close to Shand's or Stout's ideas both of character and of value. Values he finds to be subjective in that they are "the direct expression of our *individuality*," acts of valuing of a subject.<sup>27</sup> Following Ehrenfels, apparently, he defines value as the capacity of things to provoke desire, and as being proportional to the strength of the desire, thus making the motive, as he says, "essentially" but not "absolutely" subjective.<sup>28</sup> It is not so much, however, where he follows value theorists, as in his own investigations of the "logic of passion" that he gives us the more essential corroboration of the view of Shand and Stout, which by means of the conception of the sentiments makes value as the expression of interest more

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>27</sup> *Logique*, etc., p. 40.

<sup>25</sup> *Groundwork*, p. 221.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>26</sup> *Essai*, etc., p. 7.

fully comprehensible and puts the whole idea of value into a serviceable and intelligible psychological context.

The psychological school of value theorists has been interested in defining value as a basis for a science of value, but this empirical science itself is not much to our present purpose. We began with an attempt to make clear and explicit our own meaning in such simple assertions as that Socrates was a great man or that Chaucer wrote some fine tales. We found that in the first statement we apparently meant more than that Socrates fulfilled certain biological and economic laws. The morality of his act *seemed* at least other than its mere agreement with our ideas of the most useful thing to do in the light of his own interests or of ours. We found that in calling Chaucer's poetry fine, we thought that we meant more than that Chaucer was a scientifically explainable phenomenon. But we questioned our right to this "added" meaning; and in the present chapter we have tried to see whether, in terms of psychology, we could not explain our attribution of value on a scientific basis, which should give us at least a better terminology. We have so far seen that in terms suggested by Shand and Ribot our valuations are expressions of sentiments "directed toward" objects or "other more abstract aspects of experience," and that values are "essentially" if not "absolutely" subjective. But while this view agrees in general with the concepts of value of Meinong, Ehrenfels, and Urban, and is the basis of their science of values, it is not by a study of that science made much clearer as a particular type of experience. This science of values gives rather the denotation of value. We are looking for the connotation. What distinguishes valuing from other experiences? In particular, when we have valued an object, and when we then pronounce a judgment which expresses this fact, what does our judgment mean?

We have seen that at least in an intelligible sense we value objects in so far as they fulfill interests. And we have seen

that it is our sentiments that are the subject side of this valuing. Our judgment, when we judge that an object has value, would thus seem to be our reflective expression of the fact that the object in question fulfills some interest or other; and while we shall be told that this is a "merely psychological" formulation of the matter, the fact remains that any more fundamental view must take this one into account without falsifying it as it stands, namely, as an empirical account of a very common experience.

But before we go further in the investigation of our problem, which is that of making as explicit and full as possible the meaning of our judgment that Socrates was good or Chaucer's poetry great or fine or beautiful, there is an obvious theoretical consideration to give us pause. No matter what more we may add, no matter what interpretation we may offer, we have said in so many words that value is fulfillment of interest, and in so doing we have said what sounds very much like saying that the good is the desirable. We have thus called down upon ourselves, if not an actually formulated and incontrovertible destruction of our view, at least a parallel criticism of it which might very easily be formulated. It is such criticism that Professor Perry has attempted to meet in the last part of his article on the *Definition of Value*.<sup>29</sup> He meets the arguments that qualify interest in various ways before admitting its fulfillment to be value, by reducing the qualities to quantities. What is the fulfillment of collective interest, or higher interest, or more permanent interest but *more* fulfillment of interest? I think it can be shown that whether this reduction be theoretically sound or not it is rather the shutting of our eyes to essential differences than the gaining of insight through the vision of a common character. The chief motive to the study of value is just these obvious differences, and a solution of the problem that attempts to do away with them by finding a common principle is like an account of a tennis tournament in terms of laws of physics. The very point

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<sup>29</sup> *Jour. Phil. Psych. and Sci. Methods*, XI, 141.

of the game is that, both players being governed entirely by physical conditions, one of them wins the match, while the other loses it. Professor Perry's answer might suggest that the philosophical consideration of the match might very well be the statement of the law of gravitation; and that on the other hand the details of matters of value and valuation are to be sought in just those sciences of value that I have said throw little light on our problem. But, to push the analogy still further, I should say that while the science of valuation might be compared to a detailed study of the technique of tennis and tennis playing, and the law of gravitation as accounting for the physical movements of the ball might be compared to the relation of *interest* to value, as an explanatory principle, there remains still on the one hand the tennis match and on the other our valuations as the data that we wish considered. The comparison proves nothing at all, but if there is something important and interesting to be said about value which is not in the way of a science of valuation, and which refuses to stop with a philosophical definition in terms of interest, the best proof of this will be a satisfactory sequel to our present investigation.

I have already suggested that a more radical empiricism than that of most psychological investigation might give us quite another view of value and value-judgment; and before going on to what seems to me the most important part of our subject, namely, what our judgment of value really means, what it implies concerning experience in general and what it implies in particular about kinds of value, I shall try to give a brief account of the value-judgment or the judgment of practice as this has been differentiated and discussed, particularly by Dewey. This account should furnish a transition from a more or less psychological to a more or less logical treatment, for while Dewey is professedly logical, his conception of logic allows him to be empirical and so to take into account what would ordinarily be called purely psychological considerations.

#### CHAPTER IV

### THE PRAGMATIC THEORY OF VALUATION AS EXPOUNDED BY DEWEY

In the last chapter I tentatively presented a definition of value formulated in terms of liking and disliking, in terms of interest; more precisely this definition makes value subjective in the sense that anything is properly said to have value in case, and only in case, it is the object of the affective motor response which we call in general liking or disliking, or which we call being *interested* in, positively or negatively. The question will at once be asked, Does judgment make no difference here? Is the value already constituted before any judgment concerning the object in question has been pronounced? And the answer in terms of the definition as given is altogether unambiguous. Judgment has nothing to do with the presence of value as such. For example, hell has value, or the popular evangelist's presentation of hell torments has value just in so far as hell, or the evangelist's presentation of the torments of hell, is the object of a motor-affective response on the part of a subject, which response in this particular supposed case might be disgust or fear or loathing or some similar attitude. A member of the evangelist's audience who had entertained this attitude would, by virtue of so doing, have invested the object of his dislike with value, in this case *negative* value. He might upon reflection almost immediately pronounce any one of a great number of judgments concerning the evangelist, or the evangelist's presentation of the torments of hell; but these would not anywise annul the original value which was constituted by the motor-affective attitude above mentioned. If I look at the sunshine on a white stone wall and enjoy it, then this sunshine

on the white stone wall is valuable by virtue of my enjoyment. I may judge that I should have kept my eyes on my book or on the lecturer, or that looking at the sunshine is bad for my eyes, or anything else I am capable of judging; but these subsequent judgments will not deny the truth of the assertion that the sunshine was valuable, any more than they will alter the fact that I enjoyed it; for the value was constituted once and for all by this enjoyment. This may seem like harping on one string, but it is very important to have this distinction between motor-affective attitude and judgment clearly in mind before we survey any more equivocal or ambiguous theory of value or even any elaboration of a theory based on our tentative definition in terms of interest.

Even in Dewey's own theory, which it is the object of this chapter to present as the most fully worked out and most authoritative of the pragmatic views, even here the keeping clear of this distinction is imperative, whether Dewey himself succeeds completely in doing so or not. Dewey at any rate sees the distinction, and if he ends by losing sight of it, this is because he has made it unrecognizable except, perhaps, by careful analysis. He has, so to speak, shifted it along to a position where it is less easy to detect.

His explicit recognition of it, and of the danger of confusion subsequent upon a failure to see it, is made as follows:<sup>30</sup> "There is," he says, "a deep-seated ambiguity which makes it difficult to dismiss the matter of value . . . summarily" (p. 512). He continues: "The *experience* of a good and the *judgment* that something is a value of a certain kind and amount, have been almost inextricably confused" (p. 512). His own position is that of Hume in the *Treatise of Human Nature*, pt. III, iii,

<sup>30</sup> These quotations, as are all the rest in this chapter, are taken from an article in the *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, vol. 12, no. 19, the issue for September 16, 1915. The article is entitled "The Logic of Judgments of Practise." It is reprinted with a good deal of elaboration and some minor changes in *Essays in Experimental Logic*, University of Chicago Press, 1916, from which I have taken the expressions "value of reason" and "value of behavior."

whom he quotes as follows: "A passion is an original existence . . . When I am angry I . . . have no more a reference to any other object than when I am thirsty, or sick, or more than five feet high" (p. 513).<sup>31</sup> To quote Dewey himself again: "Only a prior dogma to the effect that every conscious experience *is, ipso facto*, a form of cognition leads to any obscuration of the fact" (p. 513) . . . the fact, namely, that motor-affective attitudes are clearly distinct from cognitive judgments.

It is true that judgments and motor-affective attitudes may be dependent upon each other in various ways, and this fact is very easy to illustrate. If I were not in a position to judge that a particular object before me on the table is a volume of, say, the *Journal of Philosophy*, I should not value the object, perhaps; i.e., my valuing of this object may depend upon the prior judgment that the object is a particular book. But the prior judgment is one thing; my liking or valuing of the book another. On the other hand, I am capable of judging *that* I liked a particular book; but this judgment *that* I liked the object is distinctly not identical with the liking. The judgment in this case follows the liking in time, and it would seem to depend upon it in a perfectly definite way; but the judgment is not the *same as* the liking. Such possible dependence of judgments on likings and dislikings, or of likings and dislikings on the previous making of judgments—such dependence of one on the other is only the more reason for keeping the two distinct in our minds. Otherwise there is little hope of intelligently analyzing the relations between them.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> This is the view that Professor Mackenzie deprecates in his criticism of Ehrenfels in "Notes on the Theory of Value," *Mind*, n. s., vol. 4, p. 429. "On the whole he [Ehrenfels] appears to mean that our irrational feelings and impulses have a priority over our rationally determined ends, and that the worth which we attribute to the latter must in the long run be explained by the presence of the former. Now this view seems to me to be a relic of Hume's doctrine of the subordination of reason to passion. . . . Its illusory appearance of truth is due to our tendency to think of each of our desires and impulses as an independent force; instead of recognizing that they are elements in a more or less systematic whole, and take their character from the totality within which they stand."

<sup>32</sup> For further illustration of this distinction see *Essays in Experimental Logic*, pp. 355 ff.

But although Dewey makes this distinction clearly, he is equally clear about disagreeing with the definition of value in terms of interest as given above in the present chapter, for according to him value is not subjective,<sup>33</sup> nor is valuing in any significant sense to be confused with those motor-affective attitudes which we call holding dear, or cherishing, or caring for, or neglecting or condemning (p. 520). To call the objects of these attitudes values is, he says, merely repeating that they are loved, cherished, neglected, etc. (p. 520). Our definition in terms of interest he thus apparently considers mere tautology.<sup>34</sup> His sentence is as follows: "To call these things (viz., cherished, loved, etc., things) values is just to repeat that they are loved, and cherished; it is not to give a reason for their being loved and cherished" (p. 520). Such a statement indicates, it seems to me, in the first place that he does admit the use of the word *value* in the sense of our definition in terms of interest, but that the definition seems to him not significant, or at least that value in this sense is not worth investigating.<sup>35</sup> In the second place this sentence of Dewey's which accuses our definition of irrelevance for his purposes, suggests that the significant mode of attack is one which *does* attempt to "give a reason" for loving and cherishing, i.e., for valuing in precisely this irrelevant or unimportant sense. Dewey suggests, in other words, that the giving of a reason for loving and cherishing would avoid the tautology and answer the purpose of an investigation of value. This would seem to imply that to give the reason for

<sup>33</sup> "The conclusion is not that the value is subjective, but that it is practical," *Jour. of Phil., Psychol. and Sci. Methods*, vol. 12, p. 516.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Mackenzie's article above referred to, p. 433, for a similar criticism of Ehrenfels' position on the nature of desire: "I can hardly tell what is meant by desiring an object except reading it as supplying a defect in our present consciousness; and I do not see how we can think of the supplying of such a defect without a feeling of gratification in the thought of it. . . . So far from seeking to controvert his [Ehrenfels'] position, I would only suggest whether it is not tautological."

<sup>35</sup> At the beginning of the article from which I have been quoting Dewey seeks to avoid a discussion of value as such by announcing that his interest is in *valuation*, not in the nature of *value*. But in the later form of the article in *Essays in Experimental Logic* this announcement is omitted.

loving and cherishing would be to offer a solution to the problem of value; so that he certainly admits that value in the sense in which we have defined it, and which he seems to think irrelevant, is the very matter that he is investigating. The "reason" in question, however, he seeks in a study of what he calls valuation as distinguished from any such merely affective-motor attitudes as loving or cherishing. For valuation is, according to Dewey, not a mere repetition of anything, but the actual instituting of a value by a process of judgment. "To judge value is to engage in instituting a determinate value where none is given" (p. 516).

Before proceeding to give an account of this judging process which institutes determinate values, it seems to me best to indicate at once where, in Dewey's theory of practical judgments, value as defined by Dewey comes in, and where, in Dewey's theory, value as defined in our definition comes in. For, after all, Dewey does admit two kinds of value. "Value," he says, "has two meanings, to prize and to appraise, to esteem and to estimate" (p. 520). Obviously, our definition in terms of interest fits the former of either of these pairs of alternatives, and this is the aspect of value that does *not* interest Dewey in his present investigation.

This sort of value is found according to Dewey at the beginning of any particular situation; it is a datum or series of data; it is what we start with when we are going to make a judgment. The value that Dewey is interested in is to be found later on in the process; it is as he sees it actually constituted by the judging activity. It is in a special sense the object of the judgment itself. And this being constituted by judgment, this practical creation of a logical activity, is the definition of value. It is then, in Dewey's theory, not very significant to say whether value is subjective or objective; but it is significant to say whether value is practical. Value is the outcome of logical activity in a particular situation demanding action, and this particular form of logical activity is what Dewey calls in general a judgment of practice.

In case Dewey is right the definition which we are defending in the present chapter is not to be denied as false, but discarded as irrelevant, as defining a datum present in all cases where the significant valuation process goes on to institute a determinate value in the significant and clarifying sense of the word. But in case we are right in proceeding on the basis of the definition which we are at present upholding, we should expect by analysis to reduce all the values that Dewey discovers as constituted by "valuation" (which is one type of judgment of practice) to values in terms of our definition.<sup>36</sup>

Let me now try to make Dewey's position a little clearer. I have said that for Dewey values are instituted in a process called valuation or judgment of value, a type of judgment subsumed under the more general heading *judgments of practice*. Dewey considers judgments of practice a special form of judgment distinguished by its expression in propositions which have a special type of subject matter. A judgment of practice is always made in a situation demanding action. It takes the form, A should do so-and-so. It is advisable, expedient, well, better, best, for A to do so-and-so. It is a judgment of *agendum*, something to be done; it is a judgment, as he says, "to treat a given subject matter in a particular way" (p. 506). His view is that such judgments deserve special treatment and a special name, because neglect of such special treatment has brought about much confusion, especially in the case of moral judgments of value (pp. 506, 514). The special characteristics of the judgment of practice are the special characteristics of the subject matter of the propositions in which such judgments are rendered.<sup>37</sup> This subject matter implies an objectively incomplete situation which is to be completed, and this not indifferently but

<sup>36</sup> Professor Perry does this in his article, *Dewey and Urban on Value Judgments*, in the *Jour. of Phil. Psychol. and Sci. Methods*, vol. 14, p. 169.

<sup>37</sup> The confusion introduced by this sort of characterization of judgments by means of the wording of the expression of the judgment instead of the intent of the judgment is exhibited and criticized in Professor Perry's article above referred to.

in the better way, a situation in which the judgment itself is a factor in this better way of completion. Clearly, if the subject matter implies that the situation *should* be completed in a given way, it also implies at least that the given situation admits of such completion.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, such a judgment is hypothetical in the sense that only *if* all the relevant data have been considered will the judgment be correct. And it will thus remain for the determined-upon action which completes the situation to show the truth or falsity of the judgment.

To say, then, that a judgment of value is a judgment of practice is to say, in Dewey's own words (1) "that the judgment of value is never complete in itself, but always in behalf of determining what is to be done"; and (2) that "judgments of value (as distinct from the direct experience of something as good) imply that value is not anything as yet given, but is something to-be-given by future action, itself conditioned upon (varying with) the judgment" (p. 514). One of the implications, then, of subsuming judgments of value under judgments of practice is, in Dewey's own words, an implication as to the nature of value, viz., that value is always "something to-be-given by future action," something "conditioned upon the judgment."

This account is not very clear, but its meaning is not very hard to see in a concrete instance such as the one Dewey gives, namely, the situation in which I choose a suit of clothes, put upon one suit, that is, a value higher than upon the others offered, or rather upon *getting* one particular suit a value higher than upon doing something else to complete the situation. This situation offers such data as my knowledge about suits in general, my particular wants just now, the purchasing power at my immediate disposal, the various qualities of the various suits, and the combinations of these to be had in any one suit, etc. The

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<sup>38</sup> The practical judgment is thus an imperative, a moral imperative; but instead of being *categorical* like Kant's, it is, as explained below, a sort of hypothetical imperative.

value-judgment to be rendered might well be expressed in the form, I ought to get suit X, or, It is on the whole advisable to get suit X, or, In the circumstances I value the getting of suit X more highly than doing anything else to complete the situation.

Obviously this is very different from saying that I like X better than any other suit, or that suit X is the highest priced suit, or that X is the best bargain; for I may be choosing a low priced suit, and circumstances may require a dark shade, which I dislike, and so on. The valuation or act of value-judgment consists in my filling out the situation by pronouncing the judgment in question; and in so doing I institute a determinate value, I name X as that suit best fitted for my needs and most satisfactory, as far as my knowledge goes. If it turns out, when I come to wear the suit, that it has no watch pocket, or that another suit would have fitted my purposes better, or that the same suit could have been had at a bargain the next day, then the judgment, X is the right suit to buy, has turned out false. It was really a hypothetical judgment with a suppressed condition: *If I have considered everything that is to be considered, then X is the best suit to buy; if I am valuing correctly, then the getting of X has for me in the circumstances greater value than getting any other of the suits.*

If we follow this, it appears that the truth of the value-judgment depends upon its outcome in later action and that the value is not subjective, for it is determined in the end practically. I institute a determinative value when I pronounce the judgment that X is the right suit to buy; but the truth of the judgment, and consequently the validity of the value instituted by this judgment, depend upon later action and later circumstances. Value is in this sense objective; but the significant fact is that value is practical, i.e., the object of a practical judgment and determined in judgment. Value may thus be either valid or not according as the judgment turns out true or false. And

this is clearly an entirely different sort of value from the value of our definition in terms of interest.

It may very well be that I have not given Dewey's view adequately; but aside from the fact that the view is difficult and that the whole of his own article scarcely makes it clear there is the further fact that it contains confusions of thought, or at least that as far as I can make out it contains confusions of thought; and that until these have been clearly exhibited one can hardly expect to grasp the theory completely. As I see it, these confusions arise in the main as follows:

Dewey speaks definitely of the judgment as being incomplete *as judgment* until the *act* is accomplished which is the real object of the judgment (p. 522). In other words, I have not finished judging that I ought to get suit X until I have *got* suit X. This seems to me to confuse a logical process with a succeeding set of motor-activities. It seems to me that there clearly is a point in time at which the judgment is complete, and after which the getting of the suit occurs. If this seems to present the difficulty of a judgment the object of which does not yet exist, the way out is to revise one's theory of judgment so as to include such very frequent examples of judging activity as those which refer to objects either spatially or temporally removed.<sup>39</sup>

There is also a confusion involved in making the judgment depend upon the outcome for its truth. It would seem to be the case on any but a pragmatic theory of truth, that a judgment is either false or true as it stands when it is made. When we decide to act, it is true, I suppose, that we are usually suppressing some such condition as, *if my judgment is right, or if I fully know what I am talking about and deciding on, then I should act so-and-so.* In this case the so-called judgment of practice is an ordinary hypothetical judgment; and it will follow that, when circumstances occur to show that I should *not* have acted as I did, it will likewise be shown that my judgment that

<sup>39</sup> Professor Perry's article above referred to briefly suggests such a theory of judgment.

I should so act as I did *was* wrong. My hypothetical judgment, however, stands good. It simply happens that the consequent is denied by circumstances. But my not *knowing* at the time when I acted whether my judgment was true or false does not show that the judgment itself was neither true nor false at the time when it was made. Again, it is not a difficulty in the situation but a difficulty in a theory of judgment that is revealed here.

What, then, are we to say of value as instituted by judgment? Is the value of getting suit X actually determined by judging that X is the right suit to get? From what I have just said, this would seem clearly not to be the case. As the judgment is complete when it is pronounced, regardless of our knowledge as to its truth or falsity, so the suit either has the value we attribute to it in judgment or it has not. And whether it has or has not depends precisely on its relation to our demands, our likings or dislikings. It is true that our *getting* the suit has value as well as the suit itself; but these are merely two different values, one of which depends on our attitude towards *getting* a suit, the other upon our attitude towards the suit itself.

Dewey tries to avoid value as another name for loving, cherishing, etc., but it turns out that just this definition of value satisfies all the conditions of his description of valuation, and that the sort of value that he defines as determined in judgment or as constituted by judgment or more directly still as *value-in-judgment* reveals itself as merely *another* value of the sort defined in terms of interest.

It is perhaps worth while summarizing both the view presented in this chapter and the chief objections that I have urged against it.

## SUMMARY OF DEWEY'S POSITION

1. Dewey sees the distinction made between motor-affective attitudes and cognitive judgment.
2. He admits a use of the word *value* in the sense of that which is liked or disliked.
3. He discards this sort of value, which he calls the "good of immediate behaviour,"<sup>40</sup> as being unimportant and not the matter of the genuine judgment of value, and substitutes as the significant sort of value that which he calls the "good of reason."
4. This good of reason, he says, is instituted by a logical process called valuation or value-judgment; and value is thus to be tested for its validity in a way analogous to that in which the truth of any judgment is to be tested.
5. The process of valuation is thus active in creating, is a factor in creating, its own subject matter, and in this way is paradoxical, for the judgment as such is not complete until the act is accomplished.
6. But it remains that value is the result of such a paradoxical logical process called valuation, and that the *good of reason* is the real matter of the genuine judgment of value, not a judgment merely *about* goods and bads, but a judgment which creates a determinate value, which constitutes a good.

## SUMMARY OF CRITICISM

1. The theory of Dewey, in making value, even in the sense of *value as judged*, or in the sense of the good of reason instead of the good of behaviour, a creation of judgment or valuation, makes the validity of the value or the test of the value as such the same as the validity or the test of truth of the judgment. As a theory of a particular sort of judgments called value-judgments, then, this theory of valuation is open to the same criticism as the pragmatic theory of truth. It identifies the truth of a judgment with the subject's knowledge of that truth, and so finds this truth in the future workings of the idea, in the success or failure of the activity following the making of the judgment.

2. The paradoxical nature of the valuation process, which creates its own subject matter (a part of itself), which *is* its own subject matter, depends upon failing to analyse the situation completely. Analysis shows that what the judgment creates

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<sup>40</sup> *Essays in Experimental Logic*, p. 358, footnote.

is not its own subject matter, that the judgment is not about itself, but about something outside itself. It may be a hypothetical judgment; but a hypothetical judgment does not constitute a paradox.

3. The values created by valuation, which Dewey exhibits as radically different from mere goods of behaviour, turn out to be in all cases instances of value as defined in terms of interest. My valuing the rain or the raining positively, as a force or a factor in a situation, is as truly my liking the rain or *liking it to rain*, as my valuing the rain negatively (as disagreeably wet) is my disliking the wetting I get. The one valuing only happens *after* I have found by means involving intellectual processes how valuable the rain is; but my valuing it, as a result of my information, is entirely distinct from that information or from any judgments I may have made in acquiring the information. It is thus the same confusion that Dewey so specifically warns against that he himself makes, namely, that between motor-affective attitudes and cognitive judgment. The only difference is one of temporal sequence. The confusion he cleared up was that resulting from a neglecting of the difference between motor-affective experience itself and the subsequent judgment that something was a good. The confusion he falls into results from failing to distinguish between the making of a series of judgments concerning goods and the *subsequent* complexly built-up motor-affective attitude towards, or experience of, good things.

## CHAPTER V

### THE IDEALISTIC CRITICISM

Our definition of value, derived from the empirical observation of psychologists, seems quite satisfactorily to stand the light, or emerge from the darkness, of the pragmatic view, which would have it that value is instituted in judgment, that *value-in-judgment* is what we mean by value when we use the word significantly. Value-judgment or valuation would in this pragmatic view be the primary object of investigation in a theory of value. Now we can admit that valuing often depends on having made judgments of various degrees of complexity. But we have so far succeeded in maintaining that, when we find value attributed, this attribution, even in the form of a judgment, simply means that between the object valued and the subject valuing this object, there is, before the judgment is made or can be made, the relation called, somewhat loosely and generally, *liking*, on the one hand, and *being liked* on the other. The being liked, or disliked, of the object is its value. And since this being liked, or disliked, is being the object of a motor-affective attitude in a subject, some sort of a subject is always requisite to there being value at all—not necessarily a *judging* subject, but a subject capable of at least motor-affective response. For the cat the cream has value, or better and more simply, the cat values the cream, or the warmth, or having her back scratched, quite regardless of her probable inability to conceive cream or to make judgments concerning warmth.

Our next difficulty is to meet a criticism which characteristically announces itself as the outcome of a more fundamental, a more profound, view of the whole matter of value and value theory. This is the idealistic criticism of our definition. It

has many forms; but while they all point to what our definition as such does not accomplish, they seem to me to offer this suggestion of what is so far lacking in our account of value, on the basis of a confusing definition of value, which we can not accept. My point, then, is that idealistic theories of value mistake the nature of value, but that the idealistic emphasis upon the relation of value to judgment and more especially the relations of values to each other, points to a phase of value theory which is very important, a phase which I wish to discuss in the next chapter of this essay.

The great difficulty, as I see it, of examining the idealistic point of view lies in the fact that this view, instead of meeting facts and accepting phenomena as they present themselves, such for example as the fact that I like apples or the phenomenon of my liking apples, or that the cat likes the cream or the cat's liking the cream—that this idealistic view holds that such facts and such phenomena are not the real heart of any matter. Before the idealist meets arguments or discusses theories based upon regarding facts and phenomena he turns his opponent's or his disciple's attention to what he calls the more fundamental matters of knowledge of facts and knowledge of, or acquaintance with phenomena; and then, by the formulation of what appears to be an insuperable difficulty, shows that what we started with as palpable facts or empirically evident phenomena are elaborate constructions, to be understood only by overcoming the insuperable difficulty which he has formulated, in other words by coming to understand the ways of a knowing mind. That is, he introduces the epistemological considerations of idealistic epistemology.

Epistemology is based, however, upon reasoning, and the idealist's reasoning always, as a matter of fact, begins with and depends upon facts and phenomena. For by his own admission he means something by what he says, and this that he means is something beyond the saying or the thinking; it is precisely that which the thinking or saying *means*, either that which it

asserts to be true of something or other, or that to which it has reference as somehow existing or being, that to which it points. *What* the idealist means need not be the simplest empirical facts or the most obviously existent physical things; *what* he means may be logical principles or the intricately related phenomena of mental life; but phenomena or facts they are, and on clear analytical statement they turn out to be on the same plane as the phenomena and the facts which he refuses to let us take as directly usable data.

A refutation of the theories of idealistic epistemology, or rather a discrediting of the point of view of idealistic epistemology, is not, however, within the scope of this essay. Moreover, the essentials of such a refutation have been pointed out by several contemporary critics of idealism.<sup>41</sup> But if our definition is to stand in the face of the general idealistic criticism of psychological theories of value or of an empirically derived definition of value, and if it is to escape this criticism on the above indicated grounds I must at the very least analyse an example of such criticism and show that it rests on an empirical basis, and so on no deeper dug or better laid foundations than empirical observation.

I shall try to do this with Bosanquet's theory of value as expounded in his *Individuality and Value*. Bosanquet certainly makes the chief contention of idealism in general as to the nature of reality and the nature of value, and his argument has the advantage, for our present purpose, of being contemporary and sophisticated, and of being formulated expressly to meet other theories of value including those in terms, as he says, of *finite conation*—theories of value based on such a definition as ours.

It will be objected, perhaps, that Bosanquet does not adequately represent any but his own very special point of view. This, however, might be said, I think, of any philosopher, and

<sup>41</sup> E.g., R. B. Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*; F. J. E. Woodbridge, *The Problem of Consciousness*, in *Studies*, etc., by pupils of C. E. Garman; John Dewey, *The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy*.

yet it still remains the fact that we speak of realistic and pragmatic and naturalistic doctrines as such. Our so speaking seems to me merely an *indication*, perhaps, but an indication which can be followed to something real which it indicates, namely, a genuine agreement on a few central themes or fundamental principles. After all, all the forms of modern idealism have that in common by virtue of which they are classed as idealistic. They all treat of a dichotomy which they attempt to reduce to unity; the knowing process or subject on one side, the object of knowledge on the other. The characteristic of reality for idealism is thus always in some way or other its being known, and the knowledge relation becomes all-important. In the end the unity is established by some embracing of the known by a knower, and this happens only by virtue of the fact that the known is shown to partake essentially of the nature of knowing, whether this nature be conative or not. Thus any idealistic theory of value would be apt to agree that value is somehow *known*, and that this being known involves that value somehow partake of a logical nature—*logical* meaning here merely of the *nature of thought as such*, whether thought itself be of the will or whether it be some purer intellectual principle or activity.

It is further characteristic of modern idealism that value, in being constituted somehow by thought, does not thus become subjective, that is, depending upon or existing in any particular finite individual; but remains objective. Objective, however, instead of meaning what common sense is apt to mean by it, that is, simply independent of any particular individual, means this and more. To be objective means to an idealist to be independent of individuals who think, but at the same time to be dependent upon the necessary ways of thinking, to be dependent upon thought in a more “fundamental” way. As it seems to me, this is also in a less intelligible way, if not in an altogether obscure or even mystical sense of the word *thought*. In some forms of idealism, indeed, thought may be written with a capital

T, and thought becomes in this case not only the thinking but *the Thinker* and *the Thing Thought* in its fullest reality, its deepest meaning.

But at any rate I think it may be fairly said that idealistic theories of value, if they are to be classed as idealistic at all, assert that values are of the nature of thought, and that, on the other hand, this does not make them subjective but leaves them objective. If *objective* here is to be interpreted in a special sense, this sense is, according to the idealist, the necessary meaning of the word *objective*, which itself is not understood rightly except in terms of an *idealistic epistemology*.

From the point of view of our definition of value idealism thus goes too far. Instead of making value subjective in the sense of being constituted in a relation, as was explained above, between a valuing subject and a valued object, it makes value the creation of a subject which somehow transcends the individual subject; and, further, it agrees with the pragmatists in asserting that value is logical in its nature in some special sense of the word *logical*. That is, in making value objective, idealism would seem, if we are right, to make much the same confusion as that which we found in the pragmatic conception of value, as determined in judgment and as being a sort of correlate of a logical activity, instead of being, as we have been saying that it is, that which satisfies an interest, a correlate, so to speak, of motor-affective response. Idealistic value theory would make value other than subjective; but the kind of objectivity that it would give to value is very much the kind that it gives to truth; and it would at least seem that in doing this it is failing to keep clear the distinction between cognitive judgment and motor-affective attitude.

Our criticism, in the light of our definition, would thus find two mistakes here, but it would also find one important suggestion. The first mistake is the assertion of the objectivity of value. The second mistake is making the nature of value logical.

But the very recurrence of this confusion in such different theories as pragmatism and idealism indicates that a theory of value must define not only value itself but the relation of value to judgment, and, through judgments of value, the relation of kinds of value to each other. This is the suggestion. In the present chapter we are to find these two mistakes and this suggestion in Bosanquet's theory of value and his criticism of our definition of value in terms of interest as these are given in *The Principle of Individuality and Value*. But at the very beginning we are forced to take into account Bosanquet's more general theory of nature and mind, to get the setting of his argument and really see the point that he is making. He is always working with the idea, which he maintains throughout, "that the universe is one, and each finite mind a factor in the effort which sustains its unity."<sup>42</sup> For him the essential nature of this whole is what he calls "creative logic," "which constitutes experience and is appreciable in so far as experience has value."<sup>43</sup> There is thus genuine continuity in experience and in reality.<sup>44</sup> But there is also a genuinely external Nature;<sup>45</sup> Nature is definitely not of our making. In fact only "at a relatively high level" does finite consciousness make its appearance, "focussing and revealing the significance of a huge complication of mute history and circumstance behind it and surrounding it,"<sup>46</sup> and the "bodily arrangements and mechanism are at least the basis of the workings of the soul."<sup>47</sup> "The conscious . . . self is on the top of, it is made possible by, all the stress and complexity of the work that goes before it."<sup>48</sup> It is the "climax . . . of evolution."<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 103.

<sup>43</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 122.

<sup>44</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 98. "Our attitude is that the principle of life and reality is one throughout, and is the principle of individuality, and that this can be traced in all forms of experience, none of which are to be taken as superseding or as discontinuous with each other."

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135. "There must be a bona fide nature."

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154. <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158. <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

Obviously Bosanquet is not entirely at one with all idealists, but it is equally obvious from other statements that his position is essentially idealistic: "I do not," he says, "doubt that anything which can ultimately *be*, must be of the nature of mind or experience, and, therefore, that reality must ultimately be conceived after this manner."<sup>50</sup> And he applies this to values: "Relation to consciousness, presence in an experience, is no doubt the *sine qua non* of all values. But this does not forbid a comparison of our experience of external objects . . . with our experience of our conscious acts."<sup>51</sup> "Matter is externality, a side of our experience which seems essential to the whole of things, but not capable of independent reality."<sup>52</sup> "After all, the apparent dualism between matter and consciousness is an arrangement which falls within consciousness; though we hold it only fair play to disregard this general *sine qua non* when we are studying and comparing the detailed content of experience."<sup>53</sup>

I have given all these quotations to indicate that both in his view of reality and in his view of value Bosanquet is typically an idealist. He regards all reality and all value as relation to consciousness or presence in consciousness. But he also admits that we must disregard this *sine qua non* when we are studying the detailed content of experience. Thus his position so far as it is given in these quotations leaves it open to him to make value as objective as *anything* could be. In other words, for him his assertion that for all values some relation to consciousness is a necessary condition, no more makes values subjective than it makes anything real subjective. Nature itself, if it is to be ultimately real, must be of the nature of mind. But nature is genuinely external, he says; so that for a detailed study of experience this *sine qua non* of all reality, namely, its relation to consciousness, may be disregarded. Now not all idealists would

<sup>50</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 135.

<sup>51</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 149, footnote.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

admit this theoretically. But at least their real procedure, if it is to lead anywhere, must make distinctions *within* experience, and since all experience is for them in some sense mental or even conscious, the conscious nature of all reality can hardly be called a clarifying or enlightening or relevant consideration. We are left with just the same questions as we had without this consideration, and among these is the question as to the nature of value.

This seems to me a fair answer to the general idealistic position which insists upon the objectivity of value, but which makes value nevertheless of the nature of thought. This position amounts merely to asserting that values are real or objective just as reality is real, i.e., in that respect in which all that is real is so, in being of the nature of consciousness. This also makes good the criticism I suggested above that, after all, when the idealist tells us anything definite about things, he really begins just where every one begins, with data on the one hand and logical principles on the other, both of these being independent of himself and his consciousness, but being present to him of course *in* consciousness, i.e., by virtue of the fact that he consciously responds to phenomena and facts in the ways in which a rational being must respond by virtue of the peculiarities of his organic structure, and, if it is adding anything further to say so, by virtue of the logical principles according to which his mind works.

But this abstract rejection of the idealistic point of view becomes more convincing and more inevitable in view of a concrete embodiment of the position in an argument. Let us take Bosanquet's actual procedure. We have seen that he admits that in actual detailed discussion of experience we must disregard the general underlying nature of *all* experience, as being unimportant, and turn to the actual differences and likenesses that we find—the relations of parts of experience to each other, as these relations are exhibited to us when we bring the intellect to bear upon experience in detail.

In the first place, we must select, for a theory of value, the particular facts and phenomena that are relevant to the matter. Bosanquet chooses what he calls the more adequate human experiences; life at its highest, not at its lowest, is to furnish his data. He announces this over and over again. In Lecture I of *The Principle of Individuality* we are to "begin . . . with the principle that in our attitude to experience, or through experience to our world, we are . . . to take for our standard what man recognizes as value when his life is fullest and his soul at its highest stretch."<sup>54</sup> The "necessary minima of experience . . . are merely starting-points from which experience develops."<sup>55</sup> "If all value is in individuality, then we must start from the fullest experience of it we can construct."<sup>56</sup> "The higher experiences are the clue to true individuality and to the mode of inclusion of the lower."<sup>57</sup> And more particularly it is the esthetic experience that he seems to have in mind most often when he is arguing upon the nature of the whole—the criterion of value that he establishes. "It is obvious that if we take an idea of the individual from what he is at the minimum of his conscious being, . . . we shall get a wholly different reading of his nature from that which will suggest itself if we take into account the social aesthetic or religious consciousness and their characteristic or their highest development."<sup>58</sup> And more particularly: "We may take as an example a work of art . . . In its essence . . . it is self-contained and a true whole, possessing significance in itself, and not driving our thought beyond it to a detached meaning and explanation."<sup>59</sup> "Revolt[ing] from Mechanism we should go . . . to Art" (to find the true nature of reality).<sup>60</sup> To grasp the logical nature of self-transcendence we are to "think of the attitude demanded . . . by a masterpiece of art."<sup>61</sup> It is "when for a moment Shakespeare or

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 269–270.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 296.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 308.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

Beethoven has laid his spell upon you" that "you scarcely recognise yourself."<sup>62</sup>

These are the data we start with. We must also, of course, formulate the situation logically, if we are to treat it logically; and it is in this formulation that Bosanquet throws most light on the question of value, although, as it seems to me, the result is in the end the same appeal to the conscious nature of all reality and all value, or, as Bosanquet calls it here, the *logical* nature of reality and value. In other words, if Bosanquet can be said to succeed in exhibiting the logical nature of value and valuing, this is done at the expense of leaving value and valuing undistinguished from the rest of real experience; and from the point of view of any one seeking light as to just what distinguishes value, what sets off this concept as unique, such a result seems to me of no particular use. On the other hand, as I have said several times above, this theory of Bosanquet, in insisting upon the logical nature of value and valuing, is insisting upon *relating* parts of experience to each other. And if there is a danger in this mode of procedure of omitting the very distinctions we are seeking, still an emphasis on relations as holding things together is not to be entirely neglected simply because we are also interested in distinguishing related matters from each other. Bosanquet and the idealists seem to me to go much too far, so far as almost to make their theories meaningless; but, on the other hand, there is no doubt a danger of too completely missing the fact that experiences are intimately connected with each other, and that therefore the truth about any situation must include this relatedness as a unifying principle as well as exhibit the distinctions which set off one fact or phenomenon or one set of facts or phenomena from another.

For Bosanquet, then, the point is to meet the theory that makes of value nothing but a name for that which is desired or that which is finitely purposed or that which is the fulfillment

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<sup>62</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 260.

of interest, by an argument which, substituting the idea of perfection or satisfactoriness for that of the end of a conative process, the satiety of a finite consciousness, finds that value is to be judged by a logical criterion, that value is prior to desire, that there is an inevitable logic of values. Values according to Bosanquet are thus objective in the sense that objects of likings and dislikings possess as much of value as of "trueness," i.e., that values can be logically criticized, and that they are thus established in a realm where a definition in terms of what he calls a non-rational immediacy, the bare fact of the existence of a particular state of a finite mind (i.e., a particular feeling or desire) is irrelevant.

Bosanquet's formulation of the problem of value takes the form of a question, *Can ultimate values be argued on?* An affirmative answer to this question, according to him, puts values into the realm of reason, makes them absolute in whatever sense truth is absolute, and subjects judgments concerning them to a logic just as rigorous as the canons by which we judge of the truth of propositions. Value, like truth, thus comes to be a matter of "implication in reality," and our expressions of value in the form of judgments of value are to be criticized on the principle which he calls that of relevance, of consistency with the whole universe of reality so far as we know it, of capacity to be included in the whole, his principle of positive non-contradiction. Nor is this equivalent to asserting that value is a matter of "formal" logic, a matter of mere consistency with a set of premisses, or principles, or postulates. It is saying that value is as objective as truth itself, that it is in fact a kind of truth; and truth is that which can meet the positive principle of non-contradiction; that is true which has the capacity to go on existing in the real world not only *beside* the rest of reality but as fully organic to the rest of reality in such sense that negation or denial of it involves the negation or denial of the whole world, its particular self included.

Unfortunately Bosanquet's formulation includes the word *ultimate*; but after all, his argument itself takes up and meets our definition of value in terms of interest without seriously modifying this definition. Moreover, an examination of his criticism of this definition will, I think, not be prejudiced by neglecting his introduction of the word *ultimate*. He is so sure that any significant study of the matter in hand must turn on the nature of ultimate value that he will not discuss the question without introducing the word. If it does not mean very much to a more empirically minded inquirer, the latter may still follow the argument with the one reservation that this term is not clear, and in the end accept only so much of the criticism as really *is* clear. In the present case it turns out that the argument is little modified so far as it concerns us by the introduction of this word, although the word is apt to occur every now and then as if it were an accepted modification of the term *value* whenever the term *value* is significantly used. With this note of caution we may proceed to outline the critical argument, the purpose of which is to destroy our definition in much the sense in which the pragmatic argument was to accomplish this same task, namely, by showing how trivial and essentially insignificant the concept value becomes if it be defined in terms of interest.

The first point in Bosanquet's attack does not affect our definition seriously, for it is directed against a statement which our definition does not require us to make, namely, the statement that values can not be argued on. Bosanquet has put the question, *Can values be argued on?* And his answer is to be, *Yes, they can, and they are therefore logical*. Now our definition denies only the second part of this assertion. We agree that values can be argued on; but we do not see that being capable of being argued on implies being of a *logical* nature. It will, however, be simpler to get at our disagreement on this second point, i.e., as to whether or not values are logical, by seeing first in what sense Bosanquet means to assert that values can be

argued on, and *then* how he concludes from this that they are logical.

The assertion that judgments of value are not amenable to reason seems to have various meanings, says Bosanquet, suggesting various partial truths. By judgments of value here Bosanquet means the pronouncing *that* something is valuable; hence for him to say that judgments of value are not amenable to reason is equivalent to answering his question, *Can values be argued on?* in the negative. His first point is to show that, if this negative answer means that a judgment is self-identical, i.e., that no reasoning will make a particular judgment *A* into anything but itself, it is a valid statement. But he wishes also to show that in this case it is not a significant answer to the question, *Can judgments of value be argued on?* or *Are judgments of value amenable to reason?* He is not trying to show that the judgment *A* is something other than *A*. When we assert that a judgment can be modified by argument we do not mean, for instance, that the judgment of a child that  $7 \times 6 = 43$  is anything but just this erroneous judgment. We do mean, however, that the child, in so far as it is a rational being, can be shown that its judgment  $7 \times 6 = 43$  is false, and that  $7 \times 6 = 42$ , not contingently but necessarily. In other words,  $7 \times 6 = 42$  is a statement about the real nature of the universe we live in, and to deny that  $7 \times 6 = 42$  is not to attempt to answer the reasoning or opinion of a teacher, but to deny the whole world. The truth in this interpretation of the assertion that judgment can not be logically supported because it simply is what it is, by virtue of being immediately itself and nothing else, would seem to be that it is hard to change people's minds, a pretty well known fact, but one which suggests, after all, that it is the very nature of people's minds to get changed when the right attack is made upon false notions.

So much for the first interpretation of the negative answer to the question, *Can values be argued on?* If this negative

answer simply means that a judgment is self-identical; if, for example, our saying that we can not argue about the goodness of a deed means simply that we can not at the same time both deny and assert that some one has judged the deed good, then Bosanquet agrees with us; a judgment once made is just itself. The significant point is that when we argue about its correctness, we are not denying that the judgment was just what it was, correct or incorrect as it may have been. We are arguing simply to show that the judgment was either false or true, and to induce some one to make any further judgments on the same matter in the light of this exhibition of the truth or falsity in question.

What Bosanquet says here seems to me fairly unexceptionable. If saying that values can not be argued on means that any particular judgment is identical with itself, then there is no use in denying the assertion. Moreover, saying that values can not be argued on, when you mean that any judgment is identical with itself, is certainly not much to the point in any investigation of the nature of value. The answer is simply irrelevant, as Bosanquet shows.

But this negative answer, i.e., that values can not be argued on, may mean, secondly, according to Bosanquet, that value-judgments are simply the registering of facts; that, therefore, my liking this or that simply precedes any judgment *that I like this or that*. In other words, the valuable is that which is already liked or disliked. To argue upon the question is thus altogether gratuitous. The liking or disliking simply has existed; the judgment is limited to being an assertion about this existence. The judgment may be either true or false, but argument can only call attention to the occurrence judged about; it can not alter what happened.

Now although this is not what I should mean by saying that judgments could not be argued on, it is, nevertheless, as it seems to me, saying something very sensible. Bosanquet is in fact considering here exactly the sort of definition of value that has

been maintained so far in this essay. The definition of value in terms of interest makes value out to be just this fact of motor-affective life. What is liked or disliked has value. A judgment of value would accordingly be an assertion about a liking or a disliking. Any object would be pronounced valuable in so far as there were directed towards it attitudes of liking or disliking. And Bosanquet appears at times to agree to this. He admits, at least, that before you can argue on value you must "have experience of what it is . . . to care for something as having worth."<sup>63</sup> But as discrediting this point of view he asserts on the one hand that "the distinction between cognition and feeling or desire" is irrelevant,<sup>64</sup> and on the other "that positive pleasure and all satisfaction" (which he identifies with value) . . . "depends on the character of logical stability of the whole inherent in objects of desire,"<sup>65</sup> i.e., not on motor-affective attitudes. This latter consideration, he says, "prescribes the nature of the ultimate good or end, which is the supreme standard of value."<sup>66</sup> We have thus, omitting what in these two assertions does not directly bear on our definition, two points to consider. The first is the suggested irrelevance of the distinction between cognition and affective motor attitude, a point which we disposed of in Chapter IV, where this distinction was, I think, made out perfectly clearly. To me this distinction seems *most* relevant; and with this relevance so well made out, it is hardly necessary to consider the objection of irrelevance. In fact what seems to me Bosanquet's own confusion as to the nature of value is the result of a neglect of precisely this distinction. At any rate a charge of irrelevance must be made out in detail. There is no obligation on us to meet the mere charge as such, if we can reach by means of the distinction in question any clearer view of the nature of value.

<sup>63</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 297-298.

<sup>64</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 294.

<sup>65</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 298.

<sup>66</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 299.

The second point is more important. It amounts to saying not only that value resides in the object, but that it depends upon the inherence in the object of the character of logical stability of the whole. This certainly would impugn our definition. For it views value as residing in the logical nature of the object, and certainly at first glance this is in utter disagreement with the idea that value is relational, subjective, the object being valuable just in so far as, and by virtue of the fact that, it enters into the relation to a subject, of being liked or disliked. As Bosanquet says, "the immediate fact of interest . . . is at the opposite pole of experience from the ultimate or fundamental interest in which we find by consideration that all our power of caring would be adequately occupied."<sup>67</sup>

But before we consider this criticism let me resume the argument up to this point. We have seen that Bosanquet puts the whole question as to the logical nature of value into the form, *Can ultimate values be argued on?* His own answer to the question is: Yes, values can be argued upon; value judgments are amenable to logic; values are themselves logical. It is only in the last statement that we can not, on the basis of our definition in terms of interest, concur. Bosanquet's argument considers two meanings of the directly negative answer to his question, i.e., No, values can not be argued on. He shows the irrelevance of this negative answer in case it merely means that judgments are self-identical. He then takes up what he considers a second meaning of this negative answer; and the statement of this second meaning is, as he gives it, an acceptable account of our definition of value in terms of interest, although as a matter of fact our definition is not meant to say that values can not be argued on. He makes two points here that concern our definition. First, he denies the relevance of our clear distinction between cognition and affective-motor experience, but without supporting this charge of irrelevance and without any invalidating of the distinction which we have made. Secondly, he

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<sup>67</sup> *The Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 296-297.

finds that value resides in the logical nature of the object, quite independently of the particular subject, and he finds, moreover, that the immediate fact of interest is at the opposite pole of experience from what he is considering, namely, this logical nature of the object which constitutes its value.

His argument thus disposes of our definition much as Dewey's did. The "fact of interest" apparently has nothing to do with the question of value. But this position is not very difficult to meet. If the fact of interest has nothing to do with the case of value, then it at once appears that in considering those motor-affective attitudes in terms of which we defined value, we have not been talking about value at all. But this is scarcely in accord with Bosanquet's own statement that "before arguing upon questions of value, we must have immediate experience of what is meant by caring for something."<sup>68</sup> Why, one naturally asks, should one need this experience of caring for things, if this caring for things, this fact of interest, has nothing to do with the matter in hand? But furthermore, I think it can be shown that this logical character of the whole which is inherent in the object itself and which constitutes its value turns out to be, on investigation, a confusing name for the relation of an object to a subject, a relation constituted by being liked or disliked. Bosanquet himself speaks of value as "felt perfection,"<sup>69</sup> and it is difficult to see how a *felt logical perfection* is much more than a name giving a specious objectivity and independence to what is really the relation of an object to an interested subject. No doubt the nature of the object and the nature of the subject are requisite to the particular relations that arise between the two; but it might very well remain clearly the case that the object does not have value excepting in so far as it comes into relation with the subject which is capable of liking it. Actual value then would imply the relation; potential value would simply be the possibility of the relation. And when we come

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<sup>68</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 296.

<sup>69</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 313.

to take full account of Bosanquet's assertions as to the inherent logical stability of objects being their value, we find that this assertion, far from denying our definition of value in terms of interest, is simply a confusing or a particularly sophisticated statement of it.

For let us see what Bosanquet means by this inherent logical stability, and where in experience we are to find it. It is best exemplified, as we saw in quotations from Bosanquet himself, in works of art. Esthetic appreciation and the objects of esthetic appreciation are, according to him, the best data for our study of the character of the whole, the logical stability or trueness of objects. It is when we listen to Beethoven that we experience the self-transcendence which is the "nisus to reality," the "spirit of logic." But when we appreciate a work of art fully, what happens is, according to our author, that the logic of the Absolute working in us finds itself in the work of art. We experience self-transcendence; the Absolute, which is coming to expression in us, finds more of itself in the work of art. In Fichtean terms, the Ego appropriates more of the Non Ego and in so doing becomes more fully itself. But these are dark sayings, and valuing, as we are familiar with it, is not an ineffable trance but a describable finite experience. We do actually value objects that are empirically present to us and we have even been able to say this in other words, to say in a more or less comprehensible and in an apparently simple sentence just what value is. Besides, Bosanquet himself admits that we never "come into possession of the perfect experience,"<sup>70</sup> that "the whole . . . can not be experienced as a whole by us."<sup>71</sup> What, then, is this experiencing of the character of the whole inherent in objects? Obviously, in so far as it is an experience of the whole as such it is not in finite consciousness. But it is in just this particular, namely, in having the character of the inexperienceable whole, that the object is intrinsically and objectively valuable. Such value as this then that Bosanquet finds in the object itself we

<sup>70</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 273.

<sup>71</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

evidently do not experience. What we are left with as data, as the actual finite experience of valuing, is precisely *not* any experience of the logical nature of the whole inherent in the object. In fact, so far as our experience is experience at all, so far as it is our experience of valuing, it does not consist in our grasping this logic inherent in the object. The most that can be said about our actual finite experience is that we feel the perfection of the object. But surely this is simply saying that even in the most adequate experience—in the sort of experience that Bosanquet himself chooses for illustration, in appreciating a work of art—what we do in the case of appreciating esthetically is to assume one sort of motor-affective attitude. We feel the perfection of the object; we like it in just this sense. This liking depends on the character of the object no doubt; but it also depends upon us; and until we like the object there is no actual value for us. Until *some* subject likes the object, the object has only potential value, and it has potential value only in so far as it is *capable of being* liked. Bosanquet's objective, inherent, logical character seems to be either beyond the possibility of being experienced at all, or else to be simply one aspect of the relation between a subject and an object, the object's side of the relation, its *being liked*, or the characteristic by virtue of which it could be liked, should a subject come along and assume a motor-affective attitude towards it. The subject would not assume this attitude, of course, unless it were a certain sort of subject, unless it had, in Bosanquet's terms, a logical nature; in our own terms, unless it possessed a particular sort of responsive mechanism. But the attitude remains motor-affective, and there is value present in the situation only so far as there is present the particular relation called interest.

Bosanquet's conclusion in his own words is as follows: "The question has been whether the judgment of value can be logically supported, and whether the whole which has value lies in the sum of the values of conscious states; . . . we adhere to Plato's conclusion that objects of our likings possess as much of satisfac-

toriness—which we identify with value—as they possess of reality or trueness. And this is a logical standard, and a standard involving the whole.”<sup>72</sup>

We have seen that an agreement with Bosanquet on the point that values can be argued upon does not necessitate the giving up of our definition in terms of interest. We have further seen that, if objects may be said to possess as much of value as they do of trueness, then either this trueness is beyond our experiencing, or else it is another name for that aspect of the object which is its being liked by us. We like differently according as we are more or less complex and more or less normal responsive organisms, and “trueness” in Bosanquet’s use of the word would only mean, *so far as we are capable of feeling it*, conformity of the object to our capabilities in the way of liking, the entering into the interest relation of the object in question, by our assuming this attitude of response towards it.

This seems to me to leave our definition intact and to answer the idealistic criticism of it. In so far as this criticism makes all experience alike in being of the nature of consciousness, it says nothing to distinguish value phenomena from anything else. The objectivity it claims for value turns out to be a very special kind of objectivity, and, at least in Bosanquet’s argument, this inherent logical nature of the object, so far as it comes into experience at all, is simply one aspect of a relation which seems to be characterized much better by the terms *liking* and *disliking* or the term *interest* than by any terms suggesting cognitive or logical or specifically judgmental activity. The value, even for Bosanquet, is a satisfactoriness which is somehow felt,<sup>73</sup> and both our own disagreement with him and our criticism of the pragmatic theory of valuation have been seriously lacking if they have not shown that the failure to maintain the clear distinction between cognitive activity and motor-affective attitude introduces disastrous confusion.

<sup>72</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 317.

<sup>73</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 313. . . . “value, i.e., felt perfection.”

But to show that Bosanquet's criticism fails to discredit our definition of value and that his own description of value as inherent in the logic of the object, so far as it describes the finite experience of valuing, merely gives a misleading and specious objectivity to value, is not to deny that Bosanquet is right in holding that values can be argued on. In fact, it is my contention that values can be argued on, and that such argument is very important. In the next chapter I shall try to follow up the question of judgments of value in just that sense in which Bosanquet uses the phrase, and in so doing I hope to throw some light on the status of value itself and upon the relations of kinds of value to each other. In other words, I wish (1) to make clear the status of value itself in reality, showing how all values are alike, and (2) to show that there are different sorts of value, related to each other and dependent upon each other for their value-status.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE STATUS AND THE KINDS OF VALUE, AS IMPLIED IN JUDGMENTS OF VALUE

The present chapter of this essay is to offer a brief account of two aspects of value which seem to me most important and most interesting. It is to show (1) that judgments concerning values of the most ordinarily acknowledged sorts imply the existence or the reality of ethical and esthetic values, and (2) that these latter values have a status no less clearly definable nor less real than that of the former. Our definition has already more or less clearly exhibited the nature and status of value, but it will be necessary to make this status of value much clearer, to put it into a fuller context, to exhibit its application in the case of *all* values, in short to make out the second point indicated above, before we can make out the first, namely, the implication of "higher" values in judgments concerning "lower" ones.

So far in this essay I have tried to demonstrate the intelligibility and adequacy of a definition of value in terms of interest. I have also proved, I think, that accepting this definition does not indicate any neglect of the work of the pragmatists, which is a theory of what they call valuation, and I think I have shown that accepting this definition does not indicate that one has not grasped the idealistic criticism of empirical or psychological notions of value. To hold such a definition is to recognize that the finite experience of valuing is an experience which necessarily calls into play motor-affective attitudes and not the cognitive activity of judgment. To hold such a definition is also to recognize that the presence of value always means the presence of a relation of interest, and that what is often insisted upon as objective value is merely a name either for what is not

in any very clear sense objective, or for what simply is not in experience at all. This insistence upon objectivity may be an emphasis upon the object side of the relation between a valuing subject and that towards which its motor-affective attitude is directed, or it may be an emphasis upon those characteristics of the object by virtue of which in any particular case it would come into the interest relation, by virtue of which it could be the object of such an attitude; or, on the other hand, this insistence upon the objectivity of value may refer to some supposed aspect of the object which is beyond experience and which thus does not constitute value in any ordinary or even easily intelligible sense of the word.

But such a definition as I have defended does not without further application and discussion offer any full answer to the questions which to my mind express the chief motives for inquiring into the subject of value theory. It does not say why some objects are more valuable than others, nor whether there are essentially different sorts of value. It does not answer the question as to how values are related to judgment and to each other. To answer such questions or give any information on these matters, our definition must be applied to concrete cases of valuing; an application which in view of the ubiquity of the value situation is not far to seek.

A book, for example, has value in so far and only in so far as it enters into the interest relation. If a school boy dislikes his *Elementary Plane Geometry*, the book has for him a negative value. To object that the book really has positive value, that it is objectively valuable, even though the school boy should hate it, is merely to say that the book is capable of being the object of some other interest than the boy's.

This objection in most cases would probably mean that, regardless of the boy's attitude, the book ought to be liked by him. But if there is any obligation on the boy to like the book, it must be because the book in some way is good for him, because

it really fulfills an interest which the boy now has or will some day have. This interest may not come to the boy's own knowledge until much time has passed, until he has had more experience, until he is capable, as we say, of exercising better judgment. But if the book is to have value for him at all, then it must be the case that at some time in the course of his development he will need the book, will have an interest in it.

Again, this objection might mean that, although the book never should come to be in any sense liked or desired by the boy, it would still, as an object in itself, have value, that it is in fact in itself objectively valuable. But in this case the objector must mean to say that the book is somehow acceptable to a rational subject; that it is of such a nature or has such a content that it is capable of fulfilling the interest of a rational subject, contains information that is needed, is capable in this sense of being liked.

Finally the objection might mean that the book is inherently of the nature of the whole, that it is part of reality and is therefore independently valuable, has no need of an interested subject to give it its value-status. But we have seen that in so far as the book is "of the nature of the whole," it is simply not humanly or finitely accessible. If, however, the independent inherent value of the book means simply its *felt* perfection or satisfaction, then we must admit that just so far as this perfection is felt, just so far is the book the object of a motor-affective attitude. Altogether it seems fairly adequate to define value as constituted in a relation which occurs only where there is a motor-affective attitude on the part of a subject.

But to make value thus a matter of motor-affective response does not deny that there are judgments of value, nor that these judgments have logical implications. To say that value is itself constituted in a relation that is not logical does not deny that we make judgments as to the value of things nor that these judgments commit us logically to other judgments. If I value

the pencil I write with, and if I am conscious of this valuing and express it verbally in the judgment that this pencil is valuable, i.e., is good for something, I am committed to judging that the various materials and processes and efforts that went to make the pencil were good for something. In as far as a machine pressed this graphite into a useful form, the machine was good for something, that is, for just this putting of the graphite into the right shape; it was so far valuable. But, as we can make logical statements about the greenness of the pencil, without calling greenness logical, so our logical conclusions about the value of the pencil do not say anything as to the logical nature of the *value* of the pencil. There is no reason apparently why we should not make judgments *about* the most illogical or non-logical things and still be logically involved in the implications of our judgments. Of course, if it were true that everything about which we can judge is logical, then value would be logical; but in that case, to say that value is logical is to say only that in some sense or other it *is*; it is not saying anything distinctive as to its nature or its status. Thus while our definition denies the logical nature of value or valuing, it leaves much to be said about value judgments and their logical implications; and if it is to be of any service, it should help us to say these things clearly.

How much it allows us to say remains to be seen, but at least two things I think we are prepared to make clear on the basis of the previous discussion. The first of these is that, in the light of our definition of value, we can see what there is in common among all the kinds of value that we are accustomed to distinguish from each other. We can see that the value of a silver spoon is the same sort of thing as the value of a baby, that the value of a sheet of music-paper is the same sort of thing as the value of a symphony, that the value of gold is the same sort of thing as the value of a crucifix. And this is not saying that spoons and babies, and paper and symphonies, and

gold and crucifixes are all *equally* valuable. It is saying that they are, in respect of value, comparable; a fact which would seem to be fairly manifest in our modern habit of insuring both the baby and the spoon, of paying for the paper or for an opportunity of listening to the symphony, of pricing the crucifix according to the amount of gold there is in it. Of course it will be immediately objected that insurance benefit is not an adequate recompense for the loss of the baby, or that the religious value of the crucifix is not measured by what we pay for the precious metal in it; but if our definition of value is of any real service, it is just here that it should offer assistance.

Is it true that the baby is simply worth more than the silver? Or is it the case that the respective values of baby and silver are different matters altogether, to be measured in different ways? If we must accept the latter alternative, it seems to me that our definition of value just so far fails as a definition. If we can accept the former, however, if baby and silver are valuable in the same sense, then we shall have to make it clear that in saying this we are not really insulting the baby or unduly treating persons as mere means. We shall have to accept in full what seems to me a more consistent account of the whole matter. A step towards such consistency is exemplified in the removal of our prejudices against insuring churches against fire. We have come to admit that God's own house in its earthly aspect of a building of stone or brick or wood is subject to earthly contingencies; God's house takes on as distinct from its holiness, its religious value, another value to be measured in terms of actual money cost of replacing it. But perhaps we are not quite willing to admit that its very sanctity, if the sanctity constitutes its religious value—that this sanctity, if it is worth anything, is valuable in just the sense that the wood and the stones are valuable of which the church is made, and in just the sense that the labor is valuable that went to build the church or that would go to tear it down after it had been

struck by lightning or to remodel it into a wholesale fruit house. What we must do, if our definition really holds, is to admit that *as valuable* all things that have value are on the same plane.

This is not to say that there is no meaning in distinguishing religious or esthetic or ethical values from each other or from economic ones, but it is to insist that the concept of value is available to describe all value situations, and that, since this is the case, the religious value of a mass, for example, is not altogether unappropriately secured for a soul by the payment of a certain amount of money. Perhaps it is not always the most worthy souls that have most masses said for them; but this may be the fault of practical arrangements, and it should not interfere with an acknowledging of the self-identity of value whenever or wherever value occurs.

Secondly, I think that, on the basis of our definition of value, we are prepared to give an acceptable account of the implication of values in each other, or rather of the implications as to the existence of so-called higher values which judgments of value in the most everyday matters contain. This amounts, as it seems to me, to illustrating one phase of Bosanquet's statement that "there is a road from every natural group of facts to every spiritual reality in the universe; and the essential nature of mind forces it always in some degree to traverse this road, and that in the direction from less to more."<sup>74</sup> Or, it amounts to giving one particular illustrative content to Aristotle's conception of human nature which Santayana approves and summarizes in a sentence in *The Life of Reason*: ". . . everything ideal has a natural basis and everything natural an ideal development."<sup>74a</sup>

On the one hand our definition of value makes it possible to render some account of the identical nature of value present in all genuine cases of value, from the love of money to the love of man or the love of God. On the other hand it gives a basis upon which to exhibit the implication of the existence of

<sup>74</sup> *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 111.

<sup>74a</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 21.

"higher" values in judgments upon "lower" ones, and justifies and makes intelligent our speaking of values of different sorts.

Our first point, then, is some account of the identical nature of value as it appears in all cases of valuing. What I am interested in showing here is nothing original. It is more or less tacitly admitted, for example, in our accepting remuneration for services. But it is not explicitly admitted even in such matters. An artist is apt to feel that he has somehow demeaned himself when he has sold his productions for money. Again, we emphasize the importance of industrial insurance measures, but we should certainly find it tactless to comfort a recently bereaved widow by a reference to insurance benefit. In other words, our more and more extensive development of the exchange value system of modern capitalism would seem to indicate that we are prepared to apply the value concept more and more completely to all aspects of life; but on the other hand we feel some hesitation in asserting boldly that everything that there is can in principle be valued in the same sense; and, if valuing implies a measure of value, then also we hesitate to admit that the value of everything can on principle be measured in the same units. I say *on principle*, because of course it would not follow that there is a practical machinery by which values can always be assessed, even if value be in some instances measurable or in all cases essentially comparable. But if our definition of value is really applicable in all those situations to which the term *value* is applied, then value is always the same sort of thing. And by the same sort of thing I do not mean the same sort of physical entity; just what value is, in fact, our definition has said: it is the existence of an interest relation between a subject and its object.

One of the reasons, I suppose, for the very common feeling that different sorts of value are of entirely different natures from each other, that the "higher" values are altogether different from the "lower," is that in the case of a so-called

"higher" value, the object valued is apt to be less tangible than in the case of a "lower" one. It may therefore help to put all values on the same plane, if we dwell for a moment on the distinction between values and objects of value. It is of course true that what we value may have various sorts of existence or reality; but the judgment that A is valuable means just as much, makes in fact the same predication concerning A, whether A be a deed of charity, or the writing of a novel, or a gold watch. That is to say, that which is valued need not be a physical object; it may be an ethical act or an act of esthetic creation. In fact A may be itself a valuing or a judgment of value. The condition that anything of any sort whatever be valued is not that the object exist in any particular sense of the word existence rather than another, but that however the object exist, whether as an external physical thing, or as what we call a tendency toward moral activity, a good disposition or a good will, or as an ability to make objects beautiful, or as a motor-affective attitude of liking, or as a judgment of value—that, *however* the object exist, it be a term in an interest relation, that towards which the interest is directed. If one enjoys a poem or approves another man's act or wants a watch, then the poem, the act, and the watch are in so far valuable. And so of another's or one's own valuings or judgments of value.

Realizing this, it seems to me, helps to clear up some of our difficulty. The intangibleness of the object of the liking has nothing to do with the existence of the liking itself; and the value depends, as we have just shown, on the establishment of the interest relation, that is, of the liking. A feeling or belief that value exists independently of a subject, that it is inherent in the object itself, is likely to lead us to seek a tangible object as the necessary seat of any tangible value. But once we acknowledge that value of any sort whatever lies in the interest relation which a subject may assume, whether towards five-dollar gold pieces or towards the most intangible and difficultly definable

object—once we acknowledge this, we no longer look for a solid base upon which to rest the value in question, a reality or substance in which the value is to inhere. We do not need to be able to locate and define the status of the object in order to be assured of its value or to define the status of its value. I may value my own wildest fancies; and all the reality those fancies need in order to be really valuable is simply and solely their ability to be the object of my interest.

The great importance in one particular field of this conception of value, as constituted by the interest relation and by nothing else, will appear in the last chapter of this essay in a discussion of standards of literary criticism. For the present I wish to anticipate some general misunderstandings and objections.

In the first place I am not maintaining that, say, Beman and Smith's mathematics texts are to be rated in accordance with either the amount of schoolboy love or the amount of schoolboy hate that is directed towards them. I am only saying that when we do rate them, we are taking into account the interests they serve. If they serve these interests more adequately by virtue of being pleasant to their schoolboy readers, then their value is so far enhanced. If their being hated by schoolboys is a sign that they serve these interests well, then the schoolboy's hatred of them is a sign of their positive value. But their having the highest positive value in the world would not prevent their having at the same time negative value for him who hates them. If  $a$  is a line, its being parallel to  $b$  does not interfere with its intersecting  $c$  or  $d$  at right angles. That is,  $a$  may enter into two different relations at once; and so of the Beman and Smith *Geometry*. To the boy its value is negative, to the same boy its value may later be positive; the boy, that is, may come to have a very different attitude towards it; and to some one else, for instance the boy's father, its value is positive all the time.

Nor am I maintaining that all values are real, in the sense in which that statement is apt to be taken; i.e., that one thing is as good as another, that, for instance, because I like my own fancies and write them down, it is worth your while to read them; or that any watch in a gold case is as good as any other; or that any music that any one happens to enjoy is as fine as any other music. I may very much enjoy a concert, which some years afterwards, in retrospect, I judge to have been very unenjoyable, and which I contemplate with actual aversion. But this only means that my present attitude is not the same as my former one. The concert as I heard it first had value, but that value was not so high as I perhaps judged it to be at the time. This does not alter the fact, however, that there was value in the first instance; it indicates my inadequate training in matters of musical taste. The concert had positive value in so far as it pleased me; my present recollection of it has negative value in so far as this recollection is distasteful. But even admitting that the concert and the recollection of it are, for the point at issue, the same object, there is no contradiction here. The fact is simply that I have in the meantime changed; so that the concert was the object of one subject, the recollection of another. But I may seem to have introduced a new notion of value in saying that my first judgment as to the value of the concert was erroneous. In fact there emerges at this point the apparent absurdity of denying that the concert was either good or bad. If I judge it bad and then later judge it good; or if it seems bad to me and good to my neighbor; and if all these judgments are simply the registering of actual likes and dislikes, what are we to say of the concert ultimately?

My answer first of all would be to question your being able to mean anything by *ultimate* in this connection, at least to assert that the word refers to what is beyond experience. In the *end* I can not say *anything* about the concert. In the end, ultimately, means after time is over, or in the Absolute perhaps.

And I can not talk about the concert at all in this connection. The context simply is not one in which finite experience can occur, much less make judgments.

But I would of course admit that my later judgment is sometimes better than my earlier, or that a musician's criticism of a concert may express a more important judgment than that of one who is not a musician. But what does this mean? Simply, I think, that I *find* that I actually do lay higher value on my present valuations than on my earlier ones. To say that my judgment of today is better than my judgment of ten years ago is merely recording the fact that towards my present judgment I have a motor-affective attitude of liking, whereas, towards my judgment of ten years ago I am indifferent or even averse. To say that I value a musician's judgment of the concert is only to say that I *prefer* such a judgment to the judgment of the unmusical or the musically illiterate. In other words, I see no difficulty for our definition in this change, in this difference in value of the same thing. If value is constituted by motor-affective attitude, it may be expected to change, and I see no reason either to doubt the fact or to deprecate the phenomenon. It amounts to admitting that men themselves change and that the judgment that there are eternal values is an act of faith.

To find that values are constituted by motor-affective attitudes towards any sort of object whatever, does, I think, deny that valuing is a matter of logic; but it certainly has no fatal implications as to the nature of man or God or the Universe. Admittedly our motor-affective attitudes are the results of heredity and environment, but who would seek nobler or more satisfactory origins? I see no more objection to putting our faith in them than to putting it in reason or an Absolute or a God. At any rate the value I lay on developed as against undeveloped judgment in matters of any sort, the value I lay on likings based on wide and deep experience, or on appreciations of "difficult" versus "easy" beauty—this value is just as clearly a matter of

motor-affective response as my liking for warmth or brightness or colors. We most of us have more regard for judgments which express the existence of motor-affective attitudes of maturity than for those that express the existence of motor-affective attitudes of immaturity. But this only means that we respond motor-affectively towards what seems to us to be true, to be part of a scheme, to fit the real world. And this is indeed to admit that we are logical subjects, but it is not to admit that our valuing is a logical activity. In the most complex cases imaginable, where long processes of reasoning have gone on, the resulting value is always constituted by a motor-affective attitude which itself is not a logical or a judgmental activity. We simply reach a stage at which we *prefer* one thing to another. The preference may in one sense rest on the most logical grounds in the world; it may, that is to say, *follow upon*, and only come into existence in case of our having lived well and thought much; but it itself is motor-affective, it is preference. And it is no disparagement of reason to acknowledge this; it is merely admitting the clear distinction between one sort of response and another; it is repeating that there is a well defined analytically discoverable difference between cognitive activity and motor-affective attitude.

Instead of talking about the validity of value judgments, then, it might be appropriate and suggestive to talk about the *value* of value judgments. In so doing we should be reminded that we do not discover or create values logically, but that we record our own valuations, and then in turn value our valuations. We record motor-affective attitudes in judgments of value, and then we assume attitudes toward our judgments and toward our previous attitudes, but the judging and the valuing remain distinct.

So much, then, to indicate the way in which our definition would dispose of questions of ultimate or absolute value, of questions of real value, of questions as to the validity of value

or of the validity of value judgments. All values are real in the sense in which any value is real, namely, in being interest relations. Valuings may be the result of mistakes in judgment and so may not be repeated after the mistakes become apparent; but to call some values true and others false is to use terms in a way in which they do not rigorously apply, and such usage introduces into the discussion of value a fairly hopeless confusion.

As to absolute values, the second part of this chapter will call attention to certain kinds of value which might be called absolute, in that the object of the interest relation in these cases is valued for itself rather than for any purpose it serves. But thus used, *absolute* merely means for the purpose of humanity; and it would seem fairly obvious that for human beings the last authoritative purpose is the general human purpose, whatever that may be, the concept of the general good which Ehrenfels has so carefully analyzed.<sup>75</sup>

One more suggestion I wish to offer with reference to this notion of the self-identity of value. How are we to be reconciled to applying the same concept in the same sense to such contrasting matters as love of God and love of money? Are we to admit that our baby or our mother is worth some number of dollars? I am not so bold as to assert that our definition offers a complete solution to such difficulties; but it does seem to me to throw a considerable light upon them. We already pay money for men's labor. And money, of course, represents purchasing power, puts men who have it into control of this world's goods. Moreover, so long as we feel that the fortune a man has accumulated stands more or less accurately for his deserts, that there are no glaring discrepancies between what he has and what he should have, we give him our admiration, our affection, as humanly we must give affection to what seems to us good. Thus money does buy fame and love; and money has been thought to buy eternal rest with God.

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. *System der Welttheorie*, vol. 2, pp. 41-50.

This last is no doubt fantastic, and the former unfair; but we may reasonably think that eternal rest with God is as fantastic an idea as the purchasing of such rest, and good practice would hardly bear us out in giving no consideration to a man's worldly possessions when we are to accept or reject him as a friend or an idol. My point is merely that it is not unreasonable to suppose that money might very well be quite universally the measure of value were our financial and social arrangements truer to the possibilities they offer of arranging the various parts of our world according to their respective values. If money can pay for hours of a man's day, why not for his life? These hours of labor are part of his life, they are sacred or holy or inviolable or whatever else you wish to say of them in just the sense that any finite sum of them is; and such a finite sum composes the man's whole life. If through carelessness I lose the watch that even a wealthy father has given me, his feeling hurt at the loss is certainly in part a feeling that I have not adequately valued his life. If we could once see clearly that in any just system of exchange values money, as one measure of all values, would be as sacred as life itself, or life itself no more sacred than money, I think it would be a clarification in theory worth the trouble and suggestive of better practice.

My second aim in this chapter is to indicate how "higher" values are implied in judgments of value in the bread-and-butter region of experience. This implication I have already made clear, I think, in describing the consciousness of value in Chapter II. But in the light of what I have been saying about the identical nature of value in all situations to which the term is regularly applied, it may be worth while once more to show this implication and to indicate that the self-identity of value is not prejudicial to the discerning of different sorts of value nor to the acknowledging of the implications of the usual judgments of value as to the existence of other sorts of value than the one in first instance judged about. This is to admit that

to judge anything to be extrinsically valuable is to imply the existence of values which are intrinsic; or, more accurately worded, it is to imply the existence of something which is intrinsically valued.<sup>76</sup> It is to remind ourselves that valuing is not unrelated to the rest of our experience. In so far as pronouncing a value judgment is saying that A is good for something, this value judgment implies, as we shall presently see, that there is something good beyond A. And thus in a sense "the good" is implied in any of the most ordinary value judgments. Moreover, as complexes which are all made up of the same sort of elements may be of various degrees of size and complexity, so values may be constituted by relations of interest which occur only after many other interests have been considered and after many judgments of value have been made and their implications noted. This statement does not prove the point; but it is enough to show that there need be no confusion in speaking of all value as constituted by the same sort of relation and at the same time distinguishing various sorts of value from each other.

The method I shall use to make my point is simply the analysis of a typical case of value judgment. If I say that this pencil has value, it is easy to see that I have in so saying committed myself to valuing the whole causal sequence that ends in the pencil. But is it possible also to show that the judgment that is the conscious expression of the fact that I value this pencil implies the existence of so-called higher values?

I have already shown that the difficulty of defining the status of ethical or esthetic *objects*, for example, is no barrier to defining the status of ethical and esthetic *values*. For such values to exist and to have precisely the status of all values it is only necessary that we be capable of assuming an attitude of interest towards ethical or esthetic objects; and that we can do this, no one, I think, would be likely to doubt. But I am interested now

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<sup>76</sup> I use the terms *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* as they are defined by George Herbert Palmer in *The Nature of Goodness*, pp. 16-19.

to show further that the existence of these so-called higher values is implied in the simplest judgments of extrinsic value, and that this term *higher* corresponds not to any difference in the natures of the values as such, but to the length or complexity of the various processes which precede such higher valuings.

How, then, does my judgment of value that this pencil is good for something imply the existence of ethical or esthetic values? As it seems to me, the implication may be made clear as follows: Ordinarily when we say that an object is valuable we mean that it serves a purpose. If there were no purposes for it to serve, we could only call it good in itself; and then we should be implying, I suppose, that its purpose is simply to be, or to continue to be. But to revert to the pencil. It is valuable if it will write; but if we can show that writing is of no value, then the pencil, in so far as its purpose is to write, is of no value. And so of every possible use to which the pencil could be put. If the use to which it is put is no *use*, then the pencil itself is no use; it is *not* valuable. The pencil may still be said to have had potential value, but this only means that it was once the case that there was a real use to which the pencil could have been put.

And so we may proceed, as I did in Chapter II above. We find value where we put it by valuing; but when we pronounce the judgment, *This is valuable*, whatever *this* may be, we are imputing value not to this alone but to whatever this is *for*. Now we find that what all things are for, as far as human beings can see that they are for anything, is just satisfactory human life, life that seems to be at its best or fullest, a life to which we impute value when we thus call it satisfactory or good or full. But we find short of the good life itself and its whole content, intermediate contents such as ethical acts. For example, the pencil is good for writing; writing in turn is good for getting at truth or spreading truth. But getting at truth or spreading truth is good, only if truth itself is valuable. And

is truth good for anything? All we can say is that truth is good for life itself, that men have always loved the truth, that we ourselves, as we develop, come more and more to value truth. What truth is, is fortunately not the point at issue; what comes under discussion is *our love of truth*, whatever truth may be; and this love of truth we are all acquainted with, we simply find it in ourselves. It is a motor-affective attitude.

If we value it very highly and if we learn that others value it very highly, we may be particularly interested to learn more about it; and thus we may be said to value the truth *about* truth, so that the judgment that truth is valuable in this second case implies in first instance the existence of something valuable beyond itself. But it turns out that the name for this something is once more simply truth. Thus we may say that there is a sense in which judgments of value with reference to truth, i.e., judgments that assert that truth is valuable, do not imply the existence of anything valuable beyond truth itself, excepting always just valuable life.

There is thus a definite meaning in calling truth intrinsically or even finally or independently valuable. This does not mean that truth would be valuable were there no one to like it, but simply that it is valuable in itself in a way which is not true of a pencil. It is *all* that we want, and our recognizing the fact that we want it does not imply that we want anything beyond it.

But while it thus appears that there is a sense in which truth has a value which is intrinsic, it is also the case that truth is a way to something beyond itself. If we have truth, and only in so far as we have truth, can we *know* how to act in the right way. If truth in general is preferable to untruth, then the truth with regard to what it is right to do is worth something. But on the other hand, if the truth about doing right is worth something, it would seem that the doing right is itself worth something, has value. So that, as the value of truth is implied in a value-judgment about the pencil, so the value of right action is implied in a value-judgment about the truth.

And much the same can be said of judgments of value about moral, acts as I have just said of judgments of value about truth. There is, I mean, a sense in which judgments about acts which predicate ethical value of those acts imply only the existence of the ethically valuable, but there is also a sense in which even a good will, besides being just good in itself, or good for the good life, may be said to be good for something beyond itself. That is, when I say that an act is *ethically good*, I mean that in the circumstances it is the right thing to do; but this only means that it conforms to the law of moral obligation, that it is truly ethical. If I ask further for the purpose of doing the right instead of the wrong thing in the circumstances, I am asking a foolish question; I am taking the meaning out of the word *right*. In human situations there simply always is a right thing to be done, if there is anything to be done at all. If there is nothing to be done, then the right thing is to do nothing, i.e., to refrain from action of certain sorts. Beyond our own moral nature to its purpose in being moral, to its use, to what it is good for, it is absurd to try to go; for this would simply be to try to get beyond ourselves. As long as we are human beings, we are moral creatures; for us there is no "beyond good and evil." To deny this is flat contradiction. To say that it is not right to do right, or that it is right not to do right, is for a human being nonsensical. Always, either one of the *rights* is not the *right* in question, or we are being absurd. To say that it is right to do wrong is merely to say that wrong is right, which means that what some one considers wrong is really right, or that what was once considered wrong is really right, or that what is wrong in some circumstances or times or places is right in others. We can transfer the predicate, so to speak, but we can not go beyond it; our rational human nature seems to prevent.

But even here, where we have again found a sort of value which does not seek beyond itself for its justification or for the meaning of a value-judgment upon it, simply because it is its

own justification and its own meaning, it is still perfectly possible to ask the question, What is the right action good for? and to give an answer that is not absurd. A good will is simply good, it wills the right. Also, of course, the right is what is to the advantage of human life in general. But besides being intrinsically good, or good for life, right action, like truth itself, is good for contemplation. We may value for itself the good act, which expresses the good will; but the more completely we value it *in itself*, the more completely do we simply dwell upon it in contemplation, give ourselves over to it as our total object, lose ourselves in it. And what we are interested in in this complete way, in pure contemplation, in disinterested attentiveness, is what we call the esthetically valuable. Thus the good may be, just by virtue of being good, of being right, good for contemplation. And in this sense we may say that in any judgment that a will, or an act in which the will is expressed, is ethically good, there is implied the reality of disinterested esthetic contemplation, the reality of esthetic interest, the reality of esthetic value. Thus ethical value-judgment may always be taken to imply the reality of esthetic value.

As I hope to show somewhat more adequately in the next chapter, this does not mean that we are to judge works of art by moral precepts. It is in fact probably the case that we often learn what is true or what is right from what is valuable simply to contemplate, from what enters into the interest relation not as an act to be done, or as a truth to be admitted, but as an object, just as *object*, to be looked at or listened to or otherwise sensed and felt and "lived."

Thus we have three distinct sorts of value, the reality of which is implied in any judgment of value of the most ordinary sort. Where we have the judgment that a pencil is valuable, we have the implication that what is true is valuable as being true, that what is right is valuable as being right, that what is beautiful is valuable as being beautiful. For we have seen that as the judgment of a use-value implies the reality of the value

of truth, so the judgment that A is true implies the existence of the ethical interest relation, the reality of ethical value; and that the judgment that A is right implies the existence of the esthetic interest relation, i.e., the reality of esthetic value.

Since we find that judgments of truth-values or of esthetic or ethical values do not imply the reality of values beyond themselves in exactly the way in which judgments concerning articles of use point to real values beyond themselves; that these three sorts of value are in a sense intrinsic; and since we find also that the reality of these three sorts of value is implied in the simplest everyday judgment of use value; we may therefore with some show of reason call these three sorts of value higher values. We need make no attempt to rank values in an inclusive scale; and we may even object to the term *higher*; but at least we have shown a clear distinction between what may be called extrinsic and intrinsic values, and of intrinsic values we have indicated three sorts.

But all our value judgments impute value to some sort of human life, and since human life is not an absolute in any very clear sense, there would seem to be no reason to speak of absolute or eternal value in any case.

Moreover, value, in all these cases, is adequately defined in terms of motor-affective attitude. Judgment, while it may be instrumental in our coming to the point of assuming the attitude of liking towards one thing rather than another, never itself constitutes that attitude. The liking is all we have. We may be able to inquire why we like; but when we do thus inquire, we only analyze one liking into its respective parts or else show that one judgment of value implies the existence of another value than the one judged.

For example, to value automobile driving means to value what automobile driving is composed of—being in the fresh air, exercising certain muscle and nerve complexes, viewing a good deal of landscape in a short time, moving very rapidly over the ground, being envied, etc., etc. The valuing is thus said to be

*accounted for* when it is analyzed. The object of the interest relation is made up of objects of other interest relations; part of being in the state of driving an automobile is being in the state of getting fresh air; hence an interest relation, the object of which is getting fresh air, may have for its object automobile driving. We may also like one thing better than another because it is the condition of getting something else, as we like to have an American dime better than a Canadian one because having an American dime is the condition of our getting dough-nuts and coffee in an American cafeteria.

And there is the other way of saying why we like or value; the way which in the end always amounts to saying that we value the true, the good or the beautiful, that we value the "good life."

But we can not, in either way of saying why we value, rest value on anything but valuing. We can not even say that there are absolute or eternal values; and if we can speak intelligibly of intrinsic values, these are after all identical with all values in being constituted by the interest relation, by motor-affective response. Value is created by valuing, and valuing is a finite human experience involving our motor-affective mechanism.

Are we to say nothing then of religious values? I have mentioned them now and then casually and not too respectfully; and yet surely for many of us masses and crucifixes and churches have religious value. For others of us, however, they have not; and if we find that we can speak of our religious values at all, we must mean just the motor-affective attitude that we have towards valuing in general. The religious man is he who values all this motor-affective life, who assumes towards it the interest relation, who is more interested in the valuing of human life than in human life itself. This is the attitude we call reverence, or in the extreme case other-worldliness. It may seem to some people a poor remnant of a glorious heritage; to me it seems to name the religious attitude, which is thus a motor-affective attitude and which constitutes religious values.

As to social value, this seems to me to be simply a name for a valuing that is the attitude of more than one person. If speaking of social values were necessary to remind us that we are individuals dependent upon others for life itself and therefore owing it even to ourselves to take other people's attitudes into account, it would be a valuable way to speak. But it seems to me to be rather a confusing way than a clarifying one, and so not valuable. Certainly it is not at present clear what a social mind is, and to speak of the *valuings* of a social mind is to go one step further into confusion.

The result, then, of this investigation is pretty clearly summarized in the statement of the thesis in the introduction. I have defended a definition of value in terms of interest against the pragmatists and the idealists, and I have shown how such a definition, while it allows us to speak intelligibly of certain types of value such as ethical or esthetic as distinct from economic, for instance, still forces us to the conclusion that value, being a certain relation, namely, the interest relation, exists where that relation exists, is constituted by the existence of that relation. Such a definition does not deny that we prefer truth to untruth, or beauty, even "difficult beauty," to ugliness; but it insists that our preference in all cases simply is a preference, based on nothing deeper or more fundamental, nothing more absolute or eternal, than just the nature of our motor-affective apparatus, by means of which we can enter into an interest relation at all. It is, as it seems to me, merely an explicit avowal that we are limited creatures of a certain type, endowed no doubt with what we call reason, but functioning motor-affectively as one term in an interest relation, a relation which may be assumed towards the interest relation itself.

In a concluding chapter I wish to apply this theory of value to standards of literary criticism. In so doing I think I can show how, instead of denying values in this field, it simply makes clear what we mean by valuing, and therefore what we must mean by criticism and standards of criticism.

## CHAPTER VII

### AN APPLICATION TO THE THEORY OF LITERARY CRITICISM

To the vexed questions of the practice of literary criticism and the application of standards in such criticism a general theory of value can bring no detailed or expert answers, nor can it formulate such standards. But upon the problem of standards itself—whether they exist, and if so what they are—it should be able to throw light by way of pointing out some of the inevitable facts of the situation which criticism expresses and some of the principles of action in a situation of this kind. A theory of value should obviate, then, some of the difficulties in the theory of literary criticism as distinguished from the difficulties peculiar to the practice of such criticism. In fact, the present chapter will attempt to show that the problems of criticism in practice are the problems of life itself. Thus the critic must be of noble character, comprehensive mind, and sound judgment rather than an expert in any special technique beyond that of expression itself.

But there are among critics controversies in the theory of criticism, controversies as to the relative merits of judicial *versus* impressionistic procedure, as to the validity of "scientific" *versus* "literary" standards, as to the finality of the esthetic *versus* the historical point of view; and it seems to me that it is here that a sound theory of value may be of some slight service to the critics themselves; for such a theory points out, not the right standard indeed, but the futility of most of such controversy, and this on the basis of analysis and definitions which are not parts of critical theory so much as they are general principles of valuing in all fields. Moreover, a general theory of value

seems to offer full justification for literary criticism as one of the typical, not to say inevitable and necessary, activities of human beings; for criticism is the formulation of the reaction of human minds in a situation involving intrinsic value, a formulation without which no consistently developing fitness for adequate reaction could come about, which, in other words, by increasing the possibilities for reaction actually increases valuing and therefore literally adds value to our world.

In the case of the controversy of judicial *versus* impressionistic criticism, for example, a theory of value, besides exhibiting the futility of much of the discussion, shows, as it seems to me, what facts about criticism in general these theorists are founding their contentions on. In fact, a theory of value at least appears to make it demonstrable, instead of merely probable or acceptable for common sense, that the issue is merely one of emphasis. For it is clear in the light of our theory of value that to have criticism at all there must be both the direct motor-affective reaction (however complex and inclusive this may be) and the expression of this reaction in rational discourse, in logical form. The question of priority either as a matter of rank or of precedence in time thus becomes just as trivial as the question of the hen and the egg. Judgment is the name for the *post facto* expression in rational terms of impressions, that is, of motor-affective attitudes. But a rational being is some sort of unity, however loose or ill-defined, and the impressions to which he is open are largely determined by the state of development of his mind, a development which, in at least one of its important aspects, amounts to the logical process of making a series of judgments. Thus while judgments only express impressions, impressions are inevitably conditioned by previous judgments.

The present chapter can not of course be in any sense exhaustive or even logically final; it is merely an attempt to show how in some few typical cases of literary criticism and of controversy over literary criticism and the theory of literary criticism,

a general theory of value renders the issue clearer, or reveals the absence of any fundamental issue, or shows a fallacy underlying the critical activity cited. It was questions about literary value that led to the present investigation, and it seems to me justification enough for the essay if it throws some light on these questions.

In the first place, in general, it must be clear from the theory above set forth that the value of a poem is as real as the value of a bushel of wheat. In fact, Chapter VI showed that value in each of these cases means exactly the same thing, and further, that only in case of the reality of such direct intrinsic value as that of a poem can there be any value attributed to the wheat. This depends upon two considerations: first, that men will only ends and never merely means; and second, that the nature of an end is always a direct relation of liking an object as it is present to the subject; in other words, that all ends are esthetic, if *esthetic*, as seems to be the case, is the proper word to use in characterizing direct emotional contemplation. Certainly in the cases just instanced the matter is clear. If we like to run our hands through the wheat, then the wheat gives us direct satisfaction; we contemplate it by touch; we have an elementary esthetic experience. If the wheat is valuable only as a means to the end that we be nourished, then it is valuable only if we contemplate the being nourished with satisfaction; for life as existence merely and not as valued existence can not be an end—a fact constantly evidenced by the sacrifice of life for other ends, namely, for a better life that *can* be satisfactorily contemplated.

In the case of the wheat there is a market price *per* bushel, but as I have suggested in the preceding chapter, it is no derogation of the poet's work that there is also a price per word or per line in the verse market. It is true enough that in the case of poems more mistakes appear to be made than in the case of such commodities as wheat, but so far as we can measure

the value of the poem at all, we can compare its value with that of the wheat, even though the difference in value be indefinitely great either way. The poem, not being subject to the ravages of time, may be capable of satisfying an enormous number of human beings through generations; and its value, being constituted by these relations to human beings, actually grows as time goes on. But our criticism of it is precisely an attempt to render this satisfaction that it gives and will continue to give, in terms of rational discourse; and if we were pricing poems, there is no doubt that some of us would put the Shakespeare sonnets, for example, quite out of the reach of any individual. We do not price poems, because, after all, they are intangible goods of indefinitely great value perhaps. We price copyrights and no doubt make many mistakes in doing so; but our critical considerations are of just the same sort as those incident to our evaluations of various more or less expensive brands of wine, for instance, or of tobacco. From the fact that we prefer one brand to another it does not follow that the price even differs, and we may very well prefer the cheaper brand; but we do value the one above the other, just as, in spite of economic theory and usage, we often value water itself above the most expensive wines, in the accepted sense of the word *value*, a word which economic science has chosen to define more or less arbitrarily, because, as it would seem, Economics has been more interested in measuring and in things measurable than in values.

Moreover, our valuing of the tobacco or the wine grows out of previous experience, and the formulation of previous experience in judgments, in precisely the same way in which our criticism of the poem grows out of our previous literary experience and the formulation of our previous experience in judgments about literature.

But whatever may be our relations to such commodities as wheat, it is clear that in the case of the poem we have a direct relation. Some one actually enjoys the poem, and we can not

do otherwise than pronounce it good, than acknowledge in a cognitive judgment that it has value. And here we are mindful that not our judgment but the liking for the poem, the satisfied or pleasurable contemplation of the poem, actually constitutes its value; that our judgment is the *post facto* expression of the fact that value was present in a certain situation, the relation established between a human subject and this particular object. Our rendering of this fact is expressed in the words that the poem has value; and we are perfectly justified also in saying that the poem is beautiful, if we have been careful not to limit the word *beautiful* to the charming or the sweet or some other special quality, but have kept it for just this situation of satisfactory esthetic contemplation, the contemplation that makes the successful surgeon, for example, pronounce his operation beautiful—not successful, or accurate, or effective, but satisfactory for contemplation—an esthetic object viewed as such by the adequate spectator.

It should be clear, then, that our theory has indicated how all value is esthetic in the regularly accepted view of the meaning of both of these terms, *value* and *esthetic*—not the view that would usually be expressed theoretically, perhaps, but the view that seems to be necessarily implied in ordinary English usage, when judgments of value are pronounced. The emptiness of even moral judgments of value, the purely formal nature of the morally right, is also clear; for the act judged right according to the moral law has its rightness in the very fact of this conformity; but it is a good act, it has value, only if it is satisfactory to contemplate directly, or if it is a means to some other direct satisfactory contemplation, a means to the establishing of a motor-affective relation of liking between a conscious subject and an object. Actual content, real value, is always esthetic.

The value of literature is thus, like all real values, esthetic; and to talk about esthetic criticism as only one phase of literary

criticism is usually to mistake the nature of value, or to use the word *esthetic* in some esoteric sense that makes of art one of the trifles of the idler instead of the most valuable possession of human beings. It is true that estheticians have tried long and hard to formulate and establish some such limited definition of the word *esthetic*; but the failure of these attempts is notorious. It is significant that both Croce, the idealist, and Santayana, the naturalist, have been both profound enough and honest enough to realize the breadth in meaning required in the consistent use of the word, and to proclaim the identity of the experience of achieving an end with the experience called esthetic contemplation. Croce has put it as the identity of art and expression; Santayana has clearly exhibited the sense in which all ends are esthetic.<sup>77</sup>

The controversy, then, as to the esthetic *versus* the historic or scientific or intellectual sort of literary criticism can only be carried on in case one means by *esthetic* what no one, as it would seem, can consistently mean by the term, or in case one has failed to comprehend the nature of value. All literary criticism is esthetic, for all literary criticism is rational discourse about literature, and is therefore the expression of judgments about ends, of judgments of value. But value is itself esthetic in the clear, necessary sense of the word, and to scoff at esthetic criticism is to join in an abuse of the word *esthetic* that is much akin to identifying preciousity with good writing, or delicacy of sensibilities with noble character. The two may be closely related, but to identify them is like equating a man with his taste in tea or in tobacco.

A second confusion in much literary criticism is due to the use of the term *literary* itself. In the quotations from Professor Saintsbury in Chapter I of this essay this confusion is illustrated. The term frequently occurs in this sense in lectures and in writing. Even such a critic as Edmund Gosse offers

<sup>77</sup> Croce, *Aesthetic*, English translation, chap. I; Santayana, *Sense of Beauty*, chap. I, especially pp. 28-31.

examples of the usage,<sup>78</sup> and it is so widespread that names or passages are hardly needed to illustrate it. Very often the word *pure* is added to emphasize the point: "As pure literature this ranks so-and-so." This phrasing is perhaps partly justified by the fact that so very many critics insist upon all sorts of considerations instead of, or along with, those which a theory of value shows to be pertinent. Problem plays and other works of art with "messages" suggest examples in abundance. But however much outraged the critic may be by such abuses, however much he may be justified in avoiding extraneous matters, he is apt himself to err when he speaks of "pure" literature. In fact, examination of the phrase in the light of our theory of value indicates the false abstraction that the critic has usually made. For of course pure literature is just literature devoid of qualities. We do not in the presence of literature become a special sort of subject with a special literary faculty to be exercised upon what is before us. What we do, the only possible thing for us to do, is to turn our attention to the book or the poem in question. We either like it or we dislike it; or we like or dislike various parts or aspects of it. Our liking or our disliking will depend upon our previous reading and upon our experience, upon our whole equipment for contemplating this particular literary object. But the only genuine opinion that we can have of the book must be the expression of this direct relation in which we stand to it. And this relation is not in any very clear sense "purely literary"; it is not a relation established between a literary faculty and an object of such a faculty; it is a relation between our whole conscious self and the object of our emotional consciousness, and it has as much to do with our capacity for truth, our knowledge of science, our logical acumen, the development of our sense organs, the type

<sup>78</sup> See, e.g., his *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*: "To the purely literary student, etc.,," p. 306, "we must return to our opening reservation, and remind ourselves that what is written, what is contributed to thought, is not valuable in literature in proportion to its intellectual quality," p. 386.

of our mental imagery, and all the rest of our organic, unified self, as it has to do with any of our special aptitudes; be they literary or not literary. This evaluation in terms of "pure" literature appears to be a survival of an outworn doctrine of substance, and we can only remind those who affect to recognize pure literature and purely literary value either that they are mystics, whose word may at the most be acceptable in some more or less mystical sense, or else that they have fallen into an error that invalidates what they say. For the value of a book or a poem is the value of its qualities, not the value, to use Locke's phrase, of a something, I know not what, in which these qualities inhere. The value of a book is no such mysterious entity; it is constituted, in fact, by the motor-affective relation of a conscious human subject to the book. It is thus clear that except for practice in expression, the most adequate critic is simply the most adequate human being—a fact which accounts for the emptiness of so much expert literary criticism. The best criticism is simply the most accurate expression of the most fully human response to the book, for it is this response itself that constitutes the value of the book, and it is the expression of this response in logical terms that constitutes criticism.

A third point at which a rational theory of value enters to clear away some of the dust of critical controversy is one upon which several contemporary critics are engaged. One of the issues of the present day, that is, seems to be that between the so-called judicial critics and the impressionists. Anatole France may be called the arch impressionist, perhaps, with his much cited endeavor to tell pleasantly of the adventures of his soul among masterpieces, and not to work the threshing machines which separate the literary grain from the chaff. The judicial critics are represented by such Americans as Mr. Irving Babbitt, and Mr. Brownell.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Mr. Brownell's own formulation may be quoted from his *Criticism* (1914), p. 58, where he says of criticism: "Its function is judicial, and its business to weigh and reason rather than merely to testify and record."

The whole matter may be referred to our theory of value with advantage, it seems to me, because that theory indicates two inevitable aspects of criticism. In the first place, as I have just shown, there must be a reaction upon the work criticized, a reaction which is not that of any purely literary faculty, but the acceptance or rejection in whole or in part of the work at hand. And since the work at hand is a complex expression of life in some aspect or other, and the reaction that of a very complex organism, this reaction, to be adequately given in words, will require the formulating of many judgments. What the judgments formulate, however, can be nothing more than this complex reaction; they can be nothing else, that is, than the rendering articulate of all the elements that go to make up such a reaction, the impressions produced on the mind, the "adventures of the soul," if you like. On the other hand, as our theory of value has also shown, the rendering of such impressions in verbal form can not well avoid constituting value-judgments. For the words that are used by the most impressionistic of critics are expressive of value. It may seem merely to describe the poem when we call it tender, for example, but if *tender* is pronounced by the critic's voice, it carries value connotation, and we can not really read the critic's words without such value connotation. Being tender is one way of being worth something. To take the value connotation entirely away leaves the word without even any denotation, leaves it indeed meaningless. Thus the rendering of impressions in language is precisely the making of judgments of value.

We can therefore conclude at once that all judicial criticism must be the rendering of impressions, and that all rendering of impressions must be the pronouncing of judgments of value, must in this sense be judicial. The functioning of the reasoning faculties that the judicial critic insists upon may indeed precede the writing out of his criticism, but it remains the fact that all that he can actually tell us about the work that he happens to be criticizing must be his impressions of that work. He may

put this into a consistently logical form, in fact he must put it into such a form if it is to hold for other rational beings; but this is true of any discourse whatever that is to be accepted by rational beings. And while there would seem to be no escape from this requirement, the function that the critic fulfills for the rest of us would appear to demand on his part primarily the ability to react fully to the work in hand; what is peculiar to the critic would thus appear to be adequate reaction. If his judicial function is necessarily carried out if he renders his impressions clearly; and there is little danger that his lack of logical consistency will do any lasting harm, for it inevitably defeats itself. Logical contradictions, once seen, can not continue to exist in human minds. If the conclusion drawn at the beginning of this paragraph appear dogmatic in the form in which it is stated, certainly no one will be apt to accuse the assertion of dogmatism if it is taken as merely descriptive of the usual *practice* of the two sorts of critics.

There are two further considerations to be noted at this point. The first is the tremendous, not to say indispensable, part that impressions play in criticism. Surely those men whose impressions are at all adequate to great books, or even to any book written by a mind not their own, are rare enough to make us think long before we say anything in disparagement of even professedly impressionistic criticism. The second consideration is that criticism, since it is in the form of judgments, must necessarily be logically responsible for its own logical implications. This is really, I suppose, much of the cause of quarrel. For while human beings may have opposing impulses, and while their motor-affective attitudes do not work all to one end without conflict, logical judgments can not contradict each other and still be valid. Nor may the implications of logical judgments contradict each other and still leave to the judgments their validity. And here the impressionist, if taken literally and carelessly or stupidly, may appear absurd; or finally he may, being an un-unified, disorganized human being, write himself and his

impressions down in judgments which destroy each other, or the implications of which destroy the original proposition. Consistency is not required of our reactions, is not a term indeed that always in the first instance applies to reactions; but inconsistent logical statements simply destroy each other, and if our expression of our impressions takes the form of contradictory judgments, our discourse kills itself. So that while criticism cannot be anything but the articulation of impressions, criticism that is to be accepted by rational minds must be consistent—must therefore be in accordance with principles.

This brings us to the fourth point upon which our theory of value should throw light. What are these principles of criticism? Are they a special set of standards such as Aristotelian probability, and the classic unities? Or are they simply the principles of logic itself as applied in discourse upon books and poems? The answer in the light of our previous discussion is obvious; and we may say *a priori* that beyond (1) the laws of logic, i.e., the ways necessary to or forced upon a rational mind, and (2) the data at hand upon which minds operate, there is nothing further except (3) the activity itself, the actual operation upon the data. But in such an argument it is the more modern way of procedure to turn to the standards that exist and see (1) whether they are properly to be called principles and (2) whether they are in any way peculiar to literature, or are simply names for quite general principles or for such general principles when they happen to be operating upon the data furnished by books and poems.

One or two illustrations must suffice; and it may be noted at the outset that the demand for criticism in accord with standards has been accompanied by very little in the way of actually formulated principles. Mr. Brownell suggests that the critical principles "have hardly varied since Aristotle's day,"<sup>80</sup> but one can not help wishing that Mr. Brownell would formulate these "postulates," so that they might become as definite a part

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<sup>80</sup> W. C. Brownell, *Criticism*, p. 47.

of our mental content as the postulates of Euclid to which he compares them. The lack of formulation, however, is what we should expect if I am right as to the nature of the demand for standards, or criticism in accord with standards, that the critics make. For if having standards means being logically consistent, then all that the critics are demanding is what all minds demand in all cases of rational discourse. If on the other hand standards are to name the various characteristics that are liked by human beings, then even judicial critics will admit that the number of "standards" would seem to be indefinitely great and at least to range from the most fanciful to the most rigorously logical, from the sweetest to the most bitter, from romance to realism, from the judiciously consistent to the flagrantly injudicious. Of all these standards or qualities it could only be said that those that are most satisfactory to most minds will be most valuable, remembering that in the end, as we have faith at least—a sort of Humean faith—minds are alike in structure and are even the image of whatever we mean by the divine, so that they are best suited by what best fits them and their powers, in the end by that which is noblest and truest and most beautiful, by that which is nearest the divine itself.

The two possibilities, then, both oppose serious difficulties to those who would formulate literary standards. For logical principles themselves, standard though they may be, are not peculiarly literary, or peculiar to literature. On the other hand the names of the vast number of desirable qualities would in the first place be too numerous and too particular to be called standards; in the second place, if only certain important ones were selected from the rest, they would either be general enough to be synonymous with the word *literary* itself—we hear of literary emotions or *the* literary emotions<sup>81</sup>—or, being more particular, they would not be agreed upon by critics of varying types of mind, and so could not very readily be established as

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<sup>81</sup> Cf. e.g., C. T. Winchester, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, chap. III, where the author repeatedly speaks of the "literary emotions."

standards. Further, when we have found qualities universally or even at all generally satisfactory, they will be qualities, I should suppose, not peculiar to literature. They would be standards of the good life in general.

Now to cite one or two of these so-called standards: Let us take the unities, probability, and Matthew Arnold's high seriousness. It seems to me only too clear that the first is a logical requirement, that the last is merely a name for that which is satisfactory to noble minds, as Matthew Arnold conceived nobility of mind, and that the confusion about the second arises from its being in one sense a logical requirement, in another the name for a satisfying quality.

Unity is a demand of the mind. We have seen the artificial unities gradually debarred from their high place of authority, and we have found that almost all that we can demand is that unity which defines a poem as one poem, an object of contemplation as one object. We are tempted to suggest that Kant said more to the purpose of critical theory when he put unity into his table of the categories of thought than did Aristotle when he spoke so portentously of a beginning, a middle, and an end—although no doubt for the purposes of literary practice the Aristotelian doctrine is more obviously applicable. This is not disparaging the brilliant practice of Ibsen, for example, in a play like *Hedda*; it is not even objecting to the French classicists; it is simply taking into account the fact that the unities of time and place may be transgressed without damage in plays like *Lear* or *Hamlet*, and that therefore the unities are not standards but merely the names for particular devices of technique, producing effects especially pleasing to certain sorts of minds or to certain generations of men interested in neatness, for instance, or precision, or condensation, or finish, or one of any number of other similar or related qualities.

The qualitative meaning of Arnold's phrase is clear enough. And it is surely as applicable to moral character as to literature,

to the religious attitude as to the artistic, to life as to books. Moreover, when the phrase comes to be defined more explicitly, it will furnish a standard only for certain types of mind. It is not the word for Shakespeare's humor, nor for Keats' beauty of word and phrase and line and stanza; and it does not well characterize the *Journal to Stella* or *Vanity Fair*. If on the other hand it be interpreted to cover all these cases, it loses most of its individuality and its special connotation and becomes merely a faintly colored, fading synonym for the excellent. Literary excellence is indeed a standard, *the* standard, but what our judicial critics seem to be demanding is specially defined and formulated postulates.

As to probability, the term can be made to mean anything from accordance with necessary truth to poetic justice or character motivation. It is more to be admired as an inclusive suggestion for many sorts of excellence than as a clearly defined standard of either form or quality, and yet it can be made to serve as naming requirements of either or both sorts. To be probable, characters will have to be more or less like the individual doing the judging; and the incidents in a fiction, in order to be considered probable, will have to accord with the individual's experience of what "probably" happens, namely, of what he is capable of grasping as resembling the course of his own actual or imaginatively possible experience. In so far, on the other hand, as probability is accordance with logical requirements common to all rational creatures, it names not a literary standard but the character of all of the experience that is open to rational minds.

It would no doubt be interesting to carry out this application of a general theory of value in a particular region of experience in greater detail and with more references and examples, but it would after all add nothing to my thesis but illustrative content, which I am not here concerned to supply. Moreover, such an investigation would be apt to become an adventure in literary

criticism itself, and would therefore not be altogether to the purpose in what attempts to be a scientific discussion of principles. What I seem to myself to have done in this brief concluding chapter is to give four specific examples of the way in which the theory of value expounded in the previous chapters throws light on the principles of literary criticism, and in particular upon the question of standards. It has been in large part no doubt what the critics themselves have said, but it is not so much the actual results as to principles of criticism that I am interested in giving, as it is the way in which these results are to be derived directly from a rational theory of value in general.

On the basis of such a general theory of value the chapter has shown, it seems to me, that all literary values are esthetic; and thus it does away with much unnecessary disparagement of the esthetic itself. For it shows that all other than esthetic valuations are valuations of means instead of ends. It also clearly implies that literary values, in so far as they are estimated or measured, are subject to the same procedure as that followed in estimating the values of any of the ordinary goods of the market or of life in general. It shows secondly the error connected with the phrase *pure literature*, as this phrase is commonly used by critics even of established reputation of the present day. Thirdly, in the case of the quarrel of the judicial critics with the impressionists, it indicates how altogether indispensable impressionism is, in so far as impressionism means having and rendering impressions; but it also shows that the judicial critics are contending in part at least for a characteristic which is necessary to the validity of rational discourse as such. Finally it indicates that the standards so much desiderated by the judicial critics are either nothing but the names for desired particular qualities on the one hand, of which there are as many as there are particular human likings, or else names for the logical requirements of all rational discourse.

The conclusion to my own mind is that criticism depends for its fullness and value upon the capacity and sensibility of the critic's mind, for its validity upon his normality and his logical acumen, and for its importance upon *his* importance, upon his adequacy, that is, to speak for human beings. Obviously, also, the critic must needs have the ability to express himself; and unless he be sophisticated and highly trained in all the details of literary art, he will not be adequate either to the task of reacting fully to the work at his hand in all its parts and aspects, or to the expressing of that reaction in language.

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